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THE
CLIFFORD FAMILY.

OR,

A Tale of the Old Dominion.

BY ONE OF HER DAUGHTERS.

"How lived, how loved, how died they."

NEW YORK:
HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,
329 & 331 PEARL STREET,
FRANKLIN SQUARE

1852

AL 4310.62.
✓



Bright fund

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THE CLIFFORD FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

Not thus is woman : closely *her* still heart
Doth twine itself with e'en each lifeless thing,
Which long remembrance seemed to bear its part,
In her calm joys. Forever would she cling,
A brooding dove, to that sole spot of earth
Where she hath loved and given her children birth,
And heard their first sweet voices. There may Spring
Array no path, renew no flower or leaf,
But hath its breath of home, its farewell claim to grief.

MRS. HEMANS.

It is rather more than eighty years since, that Richard Clifford brought his fair bride, from the comforts and luxuries of London, to suffer all the inconveniences and hardships of an abode in the comparatively wild and unsettled State of Virginia. The fair and fragile form of Ellen Clifford seemed as little fitted to brave the hardships and exertions necessarily attending on a residence in a new country, as the pure and tender lily to bide the pelting of the pitiless storm. But Ellen breathed not a sigh, uttered not a complaint, as she entered the rude habitation which had been hastily erected for the purposes of temporary accommodation. To build a house which would insure its inhabitants even a reasonable degree of comfort, according to the idea conveyed by this word to English minds, was a matter of no little time and trouble at this period in Virginia. The extreme difficulty of procuring workmen, the necessity for importing all the ornamental parts

of architecture, made building a very serious undertaking, both for the expense it involved, and the time consumed in vexatious delays. The germ of national character began to display itself in Virginia, even at this early period of their history; their generous feelings and liberal ideas of expenditure, led them to form their plans, and commence their undertakings, in a manner far too magnificent for their means; for their revenues were rather those of hope than of possession, depending on the various contingencies of corn and tobacco crops, which were generally estimated at rather more than they possibly could be even in favorable years. In consequence of this national trait, many a spacious mansion was left incomplete, or was hastily finished in a laughably incongruous style.

Richard Clifford was the younger son of Lord Fitz-Claire; his parents died early, and left but two children, boys at the time, one of which was named Richard and the other Francis. Nothing could be more dissimilar than these boys were in disposition, though in external and in mental gifts, nature had been almost equally lavish to both. Richard and Francis were both distinguished by features of regular yet manly beauty, but the beauties of night and morning are not more different than the bright, fearless glance of Richard's dark blue eye, never dimmed or shaded but by emotions of compassion or tenderness, and the thoughtful look and troubled brightness, if we may use the expression, which shone in the eye of Francis. The casual observer might perceive, that the glance of Francis was full of meaning, though its import was not easily read, and it rather repelled than invited confidence. No one passed Richard without a kind greeting, a jest, or a smile; but to Francis was shown all those demonstrations of courtesy, which arise rather from respect than kindness.

It was true, that Francis was a lord, Richard but a younger brother, slenderly provided for, yet the outward demonstrations of courtesy, which were tendered the elder brother, proceeded much less from respect for his rank, than the sensations of reserve and undefinable constraint produced by his character. Richard loved his brother with all the ardor and single-mindedness of his

nature, though his love was ill repaid by the coldness, reserve, and often secret contempt of Francis. His gentle yet playful familiarity, his careless hilarity of disposition, were little in accordance with the pride and reserve of character natural to Francis, and the frankness of heart, which artlessly laid open its inmost workings to those he loved, excited the contempt of his brother, who attributed his candor to that weakness of mind, which often leads men to disclose their thoughts and purposes, from the mere incapacity of concealing them. As the brothers advanced to manhood, these differences of character became daily more perceptible. Richard now often felt involuntarily chilled and restrained by his brother's reserve; yet, though he was wounded by neglect, his was not a nature to admit suspicions of those he loved, or to indulge painful feelings. If transient emotions of sorrow came over him, they were but as floating clouds passing over the sun. He was proud of his brother, of his talents, of his accomplishments, and he had always loved him with his whole heart; it was impossible, therefore, he thought, that Francis should not love him in return, and he would add, mentally, people have different ways of showing their feelings. By a happy art of looking only at the bright side of things, or shutting his eyes to the dark side, if there was no bright one to be seen, he remained in blissful ignorance of all he did not wish to know. Francis, on the other hand, was a close and severe observer of human nature, and if he erred, it was from studying it too closely, and seeing things which, in reality, only existed in the workings of a restless and morbid imagination.

Richard was about two-and-twenty years of age when he first became acquainted with Ellen Herbert. She was beautiful, yet not strikingly so; and her modest and touching beauty might not have attracted the notice of Richard Clifford, had not his interest been first excited by hearing that she was portionless and an orphan, and his attention once turned toward her, many things combined to deepen this interest to the strongest and most ardent affection. Ellen lived in the house of her uncle, Mr. Sedley, who had two daughters, nearly her own age, both aspiring to be belles and beauties. Their eager desire for admiration,

their absurd pretensions, made the unpretending loveliness, cultivated mind, and playful gentleness of Ellen Herbert still more attractive in the eyes of Richard Clifford. Every pleasurable thought and emotion soon became connected in his mind with Ellen Herbert.

" Learning became *her* sense, reading her books,
Music her voice, and every sweet thing her looks."

He felt that she had become entirely necessary to his happiness, and more than half suspected that his love was not altogether unreturned, though the indications of her partiality were so slight and equivocal, that it required no small share either of vanity or hope to have drawn such flattering conclusions from them. Of the former quality, he had a much smaller portion than falls to the lot of most men ; of the latter, a superabundant share ; and in this instance the suggestions of hope were not fallacious. The marked distinction with which Richard had treated Ellen from the commencement of their acquaintance, at first, from motives of generosity, afterward from those of love and admiration, made a deep impression on her heart. She ascribed this conduct to a generous feeling, so different from the usual heartlessness of the world, that it awakened her gratitude and esteem, which his noble qualities of mind and heart, united with that careless gayety, which is so graceful and attractive, when one perceives it to be the overflowing of a heart, full of kindly and joyous feeling, desiring to impart its gladness to all around, soon changed, imperceptibly to herself, into warm and lasting love.

Ellen's was not a nature to receive impressions easily ; but once received, like inscriptions on marble, they were retained forever. She was alarmed to discover how very deep her interest had become in Richard Clifford, and immediately resolved to check, as far as possible, all outward indications of a state of feeling which so many motives made it necessary she should endeavor to change. It required but little penetration to perceive, that as she was entirely penniless, Richard without a profession, and his resources scarcely adequate to his own wants, even should he be so imprudent as to offer her his hand, considerations of

generosity, as well as motives of prudence, should prevent her accepting it. For herself, she felt that she could be happy, under all the privations and inconveniences of a narrow income, with Richard Clifford ;—but could she bear to see his gay heart saddened, and his generous spirit subdued by the cares, toils, and humiliations, inseparable from the poverty of those who have known better days, and who have been educated in the possession of, though not the expectation of affluence ? No, it was better far to suffer alone, than to involve him in unhappiness ; and with the most unrelenting severity to herself, she endeavored to crush the hopes that would sometimes spring up, unbidden to her heart.

Richard Clifford, however, thought and acted very differently. He saw that Ellen's situation could scarcely be more uncomfortable than at present, and, for himself, he felt, that could he obtain her hand, he should consider toils, privations, inconveniences, "trifles light as air" in the balance. Moreover, he felt within himself that strength of purpose, and buoyancy of spirit, which could enable him to move mountains, though he had no very definite purpose as to when and how these energies were to be directed. His declaration of love was soon made, and urged with characteristic ardor and disinterestedness. But he was both grieved and vexed at Ellen's gentle, yet decided refusal ; his distress and mortification wrung from her the avowal of her own attachment, accompanied, however, with a declaration of her fixed resolution not to involve him in the trials and difficulties which must necessarily result from their union. Richard endeavored in vain to magnify his own resources and his capacities for exertion ; even his love for Ellen could not make him deviate from truth ; and she answered all his visionary schemes and vain hopes with so many sad realities and reasonable calculations, that he became at length, for the first time in his life, really angry with her. Could she love him truly, and reason so coldly, so cautiously ? Yet Ellen was truth itself ; and why should he doubt the sincerity of her love, when it was plain that she could lose nothing by their union ? and it must be for his sake, and not her own, that she sustained her firmness, against

the pleadings of her own heart, and the earnestness of his solicitations. Ellen saw the indignant and sorrowful feelings which were swelling in Richard's breast, for his looks and manner always afforded plain indications of the feelings of his heart ; she looked earnestly and sorrowfully in his face, and tears dimmed her eyes as she said, " Richard, I see that you do not entirely acquit me of selfishness and unkindness in—"

" Stop Ellen, I can not permit you even for a moment to think that I suppose you capable of selfishness ; no, I only think that your love is very different from mine, or you could not calculate so coldly, argue so **reasonably**, and refuse so decidedly to make me happy."

" It is, because my love resembles yours in depth and sincerity," said Ellen, slightly blushing, " that I can not consent to expose you to trials, of which you can not appreciate the severity ; you have known nothing, hitherto, but ease and gayety ; and the experience of your life, **as well as** your natural disposition leads you to indulge in the **bright** visions of hope, but with me the case is far different. I was nurtured in sorrow and apprehension ; from my earliest recollection, my mother was suffering under the influence of a hopeless malady. I saw the anguish which wrung my father's heart, when he was unable to procure for her the luxuries, and sometimes even the comforts, to which she had been accustomed ; the mortifications which his proud spirit often suffered, for her sake rather than his own ; the bitter struggle with which he consented to receive pecuniary aid, not very delicately offered, by one of my mother's relations, for the education of my brother and myself. I had no sister to share my sorrows ; my only brother was younger than myself, gay and thoughtless, and I could not bear to cloud the sunshine of his breast by the expression of my own sorrowful feelings. On the contrary, whenever we were together, I always tried to enter into his sports, his feelings, and, as our means of gratifying our childish fancies were very limited, I learned never to express a desire in opposition to his, and so habitually did I sacrifice every little wish to him, that at last I ceased altogether to form them. There are many kinds of martyrdom, Richard, but that martyr-

dom of the heart, which consists in the habitual suppression of natural feeling, in striving to appear gay and cheerful, when your very soul is sad within you, that you may lessen the sorrows of those who are dearer to you than yourself, that martyrdom was mine, and this it was which almost dried within me the springs of hope and expectation. I saw the constant, the harassing struggle which my father made to conceal from my mother, all the real difficulties and distresses of his situation, until she was released from all earthly suffering—and then, Richard, I had the irrepressible pain of watching my father's declining health, inadequate to the exertion necessary for our maintenance, his debts and difficulties daily increasing, the united pressure of infirmities, anxiety, and over-exertion producing sometimes fits of garrulous impatience, sometimes moods of silent and heart-breaking despondency, in a temper naturally of singular sweetness and gayety."

Ellen paused, the tears streamed unheeded down her cheeks and her voice faltered: Richard felt tears rushing to his own eyes, he took her hand kindly within his own, and said, "Do not dear Ellen, afflict yourself with these melancholy recollections."

Ellen wiped away her tears, and resumed, in a calm voice—"Yes, Richard, it is due both to you and to myself, that you should understand me fully. Why should I shrink from clothing in words, recollections which so often recur to my mind with the most vivid reality? A few months before my father's death, my brother, by the interest of a friend, procured a place in the navy. This was not the situation which my father would have chosen for his son, but as he had not means to complete his education, he was compelled to place him in any situation that offered, where he could maintain the rank of a gentleman. He parted from him, when a child, utterly unacquainted with the cold world on which he was thrown, without friends or patronage, and with the sad consciousness that he should see his face no more. My father felt that his death-warrant was sealed, and his anxiety and distress, occasioned by the prospect of leaving me a helpless orphan, was inexpressibly painful to me to witness. I would boast of all my little accomplishments and acquirements,

would endeavor to prove how easily I could maintain myself by my own exertions, somewhat as you were doing, a little while ago, Richard, and would affect a confidence in the assistance of my mother's friends which I was far from feeling. But it was perfectly true, that I was not disquieted by one thought of my future fate, for I thought only of comforting my father. He would shake his head mournfully in reply, and sometimes gaze on me with a sadness which seemed to enter my very soul. I would have given worlds just once to have poured out my whole heart to him, but I knew this must not be. I felt that my help was in God only, and an humble trust in Him alone sustained me through trials on which I must not dwell.

"I often spent half the night and the early hours of the morning, before my father had risen, in labors of the needle or pencil, to increase our scanty resources; and, hardest of all, I bowed my pride, and conquered my natural timidity, so far as to apply, privately, for assistance, to a wealthy and benevolent individual, with whom I was slightly acquainted: informing him, however, that my application was made without my father's knowledge or consent; for I could not bear that any one should think he was a petitioner for charity. I carefully concealed this circumstance from my father, yet I thought some passing suspicion crossed his mind. One of the first uses I made of the money, received by this means, was to procure some pine-apples, for which he had expressed a great desire the day before; but would not allow me to purchase them, as he said we could not afford such indulgences. I entered his room with my pine-apples with a sensation of triumph and joy, to which I had long been a stranger; and it gratifies me, even now, to recall the smile that lit up his pale face at my appearance, and the pleasure with which he partook of my offering. At first he looked wistfully and inquiringly in my face for a moment, but I evaded the mute question, by saying, that I had disposed very advantageously that morning of some ornamental needle-work, which was true; but I did not add that it yielded so scanty a sum, that it did not suffice to supply the most necessary and pressing demands.

"As my father's debility increased, he seemed conscious that he

was no longer able to struggle with his own feelings, that he was utterly incapable of any effort for our support, and he seemed to surrender himself almost like a child to my guidance; but I could read his thoughts in the sad and pitying glances which he often cast upon me. I hoarded my little treasure; I parted with every trinket which my mother had preserved, because they were hallowed to her by precious recollections; and every hour which I could spare from attending on my father, except those passed in sleep, was devoted to toiling, either at the needle or pencil, to supply his wants.

“One morning, upon going into his room, I was struck with an instant pang, as I observed the exhausted look and pallid hue of his countenance. He had appeared the night before much better than usual, and I had retired to rest cheered and comforted by this little gleam of hope. He beckoned me to his bed-side, and whispering me to take a seat, told me that he had written, a day or two ago, to Mr. Sedley, my mother’s brother, to request he would visit him immediately. ‘He once loved your mother,’ said my father; ‘he was not a hard-hearted man, when we were in habits of intercourse; and, I think, he will not refuse to answer the appeal.’

“I could only answer by a pressure of the hand, and a sob, which my utmost efforts could not prevent, for the truth flashed instantly across my mind—a fatal presentiment that was soon realized.

“Mr. Sedley arrived; he was not a hard-hearted man, but if he had had a heart of stone, it must have melted at the scene before him. In accents almost inaudible, my father told him, that no personal consideration should ever have induced him to make an appeal to his charity or compassion; but that, feeling his hours were numbered, and knowing that he had once loved his sister, for her child he begged only that she might be preserved from the sufferings of want, and be placed in some situation, where she might, at least, be under respectable protection. I could not bear the glance of supplication which my father cast upon my uncle; I threw myself on my knees by his bed-side, and conjured him not to distress himself about me in an hour like this.

"Mr. Sedley seemed much affected, raised me kindly, kissed me, took my father's hand in his, and with kindness, for which I shall thank him until my dying hour, however the promise may have been verified, soothed my father's last hours, with the assurance that he would take me to live at his own home with his daughters, and would be to me a father. My father blessed and thanked him, almost with his last breath. He expired in my arms, and I fell on my knees and thanked God for his gentle release from all suffering, though I felt that I was *alone* in the world.

"Alone, indeed; but I had even yet to learn the full import of that bitter word. I had yet to feel all the miseries of dependence, though I tried to make myself as little burdensome as possible to those on whom I was thrown. I looked in vain for a glance of sympathy, longed for one word of cordiality and confidence; I felt ~~every~~ *every* day that I was not one of those under whose roof I lived, ~~not do~~ I mean to blame them. Our pursuits, our educations, were so different; all the thoughts which sometimes crushed and melted my very soul, were chained in the silent dungeons of my heart; all on the surface was calm. I thought that I had learned to bow my rebellious feelings in submission to the decrees of infinite mercy, and could quietly wait my appointed time without hope or fear, until you awakened visions of joy and hope. My eyes were soon opened to perceive that it was worse than madness to encourage such feelings; for even if you felt the affection for me I thought you did, after all my bitter experience nothing should have induced me to expose you to the possibility of suffering such trials, as I had seen my father endure. One word more, Richard, and I have done: do not increase the conflict in my heart, already *too* severe; do not urge me on this point, for both duty and affection ~~make~~ *make* my resolution unalterable."

There is a sad firmness ~~which~~ *which* subdues the opposition even of the most determined. We perceive the internal effort which such resolution costs, and feel that it proceeds from a fixed and immutable principle. The rains may descend, and the winds may blow, upon a house founded on a rock, in vain.

Richard looked silently at Ellen for some minutes; then, burying his face in his hands, appeared *lost* in profound meditation.

At length suddenly turning toward her, while a new beam of hope lit up his countenance, he said :

"Ellen, I see and feel it would be useless to combat your resolution. Your mind is in a morbid state on this subject, from the effect of all those painful scenes and trials, to which I shudder to think you have been exposed. And, though you are inflicting on me the utmost unhappiness, from the most generous and disinterested feelings, yet I know that any appeal from your decision would be useless. But I do not yet despair, one ray remains by which you may yet be mine, consistently with your own principles." He paused and looked again at Ellen ; the bright color that rose to her cheeks, and the smile that played upon her lips, assured him how gladly she would see the obstacle removed to their union. He continued in a more assured tone : "This plan, on your part, however, invites many sacrifices, yet, I hope you will not be terrified by them. You have no one here to whom you are much attached : and for me, I would gladly renounce all my friends for your sake. What say you to exile ? Could you consent to accompany me to Virginia, if I could find there, at once, the means of easy and honorable independence, perhaps even of affluence ?"

The bright color faded from Ellen's cheek, but she answered him instantly in the affirmative, by extending her hand toward him, for she was incapable of uttering a syllable. The idea was stunning, overpowering, but there was no sacrifice which she would have hesitated a minute to make for Richard Clifford's sake, consistently with her own principles.

"Thank you, dearest Ellen," he said, "a thousand times ; for myself, a wild life suits well my natural disposition for enterprise and adventure, and we shall find our countrymen, even if we leave our country. A few years, too, if we are prosperous, which you must excuse me for hoping, as I am not yet convinced this most pleasing of all sensations is always to be repressed, and we may return again to England to enjoy the reward of our exertions and sacrifices. My mother's brother, Mr. Mansel, a wealthy old bachelor residing in Scotland, possesses an immense tract of land in Virginia, which has been very partially cleared, a portion of

it has been cultivated by slaves, but as it has never been well managed, though the soil is said to be extremely fertile, it has not hitherto been very profitable. A few months since, my uncle and I were talking over my future plans in life; and I objecting to every thing that could be proposed, for I had then no motive sufficiently strong to overcome the natural restlessness of buoyant spirits so far as to confine them to any regular routine, he proposed, in the course of our conversation, that I should take immediate possession of these lands, which he said he had always intended ultimately for me; but on condition of my going out to Virginia he would give me immediate possession. A few years' exertion, he was pleased to add, would give consistence and steadiness to my character, and I might be enabled to return to my own country, with an honorable independence, probably in possession of a handsome fortune. I was gratified at his kindness, but declined the offer, nor have I ever thought of it since, until the present moment. Were you more happily situated, I hope, though I am not sure I have so much self-command, I could be generous enough to advise you to consider whether you could be happy away from every object that you have ever known. But, I think, under present circumstances, it can not be selfish to urge you to take a step which, while it is the only means of rescuing my happiness, will not be inimical to your own."

"As it respects myself," said Ellen, firmly, though her tone was not unmixed with sadness, "however happy my situation might be, I should not hesitate to accompany you under such circumstances. But have you ever realized the idea of becoming an exile from your country, of parting with your brother, your—"

"Say no more, Ellen," said Richard, with much emotion, "why thus torment me with doubts and fears? You but little understand the nature of my attachment, if you think that I could hesitate as to the alternative of leaving my country and friends, or giving you up forever. One word more of hesitation, from any suspicion of this kind, and I shall be seriously and deeply wounded."

"Not one word more then," said Ellen, half smiling.

It was arranged that Richard was to set out next morning, on

a visit to Mr. Mansel, to inform him of his determination to embrace the kind offer he had made him but a few months since. **Ellen** consented to be married immediately after his return, and set out in two months for Virginia, as the most favorable season for going out would then have arrived. But Richard determined before he started for Scotland to see his brother, who was then in London, to make him acquainted with the story of his love, to describe Ellen's character as it appeared to him; thinking that as Francis was very rich, he might perhaps offer some assistance to give him a fair start in life, without impoverishing himself, and thus obviate the necessity of carrying Ellen into banishment, or of separating himself from friends and a brother to whom he was strongly attached.

His tale, notwithstanding the gloomy colors with which love and imagination had invested it, was received by Francis with manifest coldness and disapprobation. Richard had felt so certain of the effect which his representation must make on the heart of his brother, that it was with the utmost surprise, he heard him utter sentiments of decided disapproval, in a cold, dry tone, which convinced even him that his eloquence had been thrown away. His heart swelled with indignant mortification, but as his was truly a generous and affectionate nature, mortification in finding that he had mistaken his brother's character and degree of affection for him, predominated over every other feeling. And he internally resolved that even were Francis to offer the assistance which he had so greatly wished, and so confidently expected, but a few hours since, he neither could nor would accept it.

Francis described to him strongly all the distresses and privations to which such an union would expose him. Then he treated the whole affair with that light and withering sort of ridicule, which is so apt first to exasperate youthful minds, then to make them blush at their own emotions, and finally to dry up the springs of noble and disinterested feeling. The love of the beautiful, the true, perishes beneath its blighting influence, and the soil which might have brought forth bright flowers, and refreshing fruits, becomes a parched desert. Francis even hinted

at the policy and propriety of dissolving an engagement, formed in folly and rashness, and the consequences of which must otherwise be as lasting as life. Richard's eye kindled, and the blood mounted to his temples; he was about to interrupt his brother with an indignant reply, but the eagle eye of Francis discovered he was treading on dangerous ground; it suited neither his policy nor his pride to make a dishonorable proposition openly, especially when he perceived it would be unavailing; he therefore instantly changed his tone to one of the most persuasive sweetness. He made so many modifications, limitations, and exceptions of his former equivocal speech, as to make Richard suppose he had misunderstood his meaning, and blush at having entertained such unworthy suspicions of his brother, especially, too, as Francis added professions of affection, made with a grace of manner and melody of voice peculiarly his own, and asked what motive he could have had in all that he had said, but interest in his happiness. Richard was softened, he took his brother's hand, he strove to believe all that he said, and more than half-succeeded in doing so, but still the whole interview left so painful an impression on his mind, that he endeavored, afterward, to banish all recollection of it from his mind, and in the art of forgetting what he did not wish to remember, he was peculiarly happy.

After all, thought Richard, as he set out next morning for Scotland, with renewed hopes, it is not such a dreadful thing to live in Virginia. New lands, new occupations, will have charms for me. I shall find my countrymen, and with Ellen I could be happy any where.

But Ellen's feelings were of a very different character; she had never wavered for a minute in deciding on her course of action; there was nothing on earth she loved so much as Richard, and for his sake she could consent to leave England forever. Yet in deep and quiet natures, such as Ellen Herbert's, the sources of feeling are inexhaustible, they cease but with life itself; and in such hearts, particularly in those of women, the love of country seems to become a part of their very existence. It is certainly distinct from what is called patriotism, and would be best described by the state of feeling said by phrenologists to belong to

those who have the organ of inhabitiveness more than usually developed. To them

"There is a story in every breeze,
And a picture in every wave."

Nature does not present to their eyes mere inanimate objects ; she lives and breathes in every object with a thousand associations, awakening love and joy, sorrow and tenderness.

An inexpressible feeling of sadness now often came over Ellen's heart ; every tree and every flower became dear to her now, when she thought she should so soon behold them no more forever. All the unkindness and neglect she had experienced in her uncle's family was effaced in her mind, by the thought that in a few months more the wide ocean would roll between them, and they would be almost in different worlds.

CHAPTER II.

It is well through the rich wild woods to go,
And to pierce the haunts of the fawn and doe ;
And to hear the gushing of gentle springs,
When the heart has been wounded with worldly stings ;
And to watch the colors that flit and pass,
With insect wings through the wavy grass ;
And the silvery gleam through the ash-tree's bark
Borne in with a breeze, through the foliage dark.

MRS. HEMANS.

RICHARD CLIFFORD's description of Ellen to his brother had not been thrown away upon ears so entirely unmindful as he had supposed. The curiosity of Francis was aroused by his glowing description, and he determined to renew his acquaintance with Mr. Sedley, that he might see this wonderful paragon of beauty and perfection. Richard had said that her beauty was not of a dazzling or striking character, but that there was an indiscrible expression of sensibility, intelligence, and loveliness in her countenance, which, united with a gentle and dignified manner peculiar to herself, made her altogether infinitely more interesting and attractive than any woman he had ever seen. There was something in this description that pleased the fancy of Francis, and he resolved to see for himself whether the original corresponded with the portrait.

It is not difficult for a young and handsome nobleman, possessing, likewise, extraordinary talents and acquirements, to renew an acquaintance, if he wishes to do so. Richard's prolonged absence, too, favored his designs, for finding Mr. Mansel ill, he was detained in Scotland much longer than he had expected. During this time Francis became a frequent visitor at Mr. Sedley's, and no one could have been more surprised than himself to perceive the sort of fascination, which Ellen's attractions had thrown over his heart and imagination. The most cunning and cautious

often err, from their inability to calculate the power of feelings which have been so seldom and so partially called into action in their hearts, that they have not learned to estimate their strength.

Francis possessed exquisite literary tastes, and a depth of reflection far beyond his years: he was surprised at the richness, variety, and beauty, at the literary treasures which, to use the words of a distinguished female writer, "were detected rather than displayed" in Ellen Herbert's conversation. Delight and admiration succeeded surprise; there was a depth in Ellen's thoughts, a self-possession, a composed grace and dignity in her manner, a shade of pensiveness in her countenance deepening at times into sadness, which made her cast of mind and style of beauty peculiarly attractive to one possessing the deeply reflective character and refined taste of Lord Fitz-Clare.

We will not attempt to account for the strange anomaly which we sometimes see, not only in the admiration of virtue felt by the unprincipled, but even an exquisite moral perception, which enables them to understand minute refinements and delicacies of virtuous feeling into which some truly good people of coarser perceptions are not able to enter. Ellen Herbert was much gratified by the delicate attentions, and interested by the highly intellectual conversation of Francis. Language was not to him an imperfect medium for conveying ordinary or uninteresting ideas, but rather as a harp in the hands of a master, sending forth strains of power and sweetness, which, when touched by another hand, we had not supposed the instrument capable of producing; we knew not the spell hidden amid the chords, which waited but the touch of the magician to call them forth.

Ellen attributed the attentions of Lord Fitz-Clare to his affection for his brother, and this supposition made them greatly more acceptable. She thought, too, it showed a singular nobleness and generosity of mind to be pleased at the prospect of an alliance which, considered in a worldly point of view, would be anything but advantageous to Richard Clifford. Some secret, though unacknowledged hope lurked, too, in her mind, that one, so generous, so kind, and the possessor of an ample fortune, would not per-

mit a brother to go into a dreary banishment when he had the means of preventing it.

Ellen, accordingly, exerted all her powers to please Lord Fitz-Care, in which she was but too successful. Francis rejoiced at his brother's detention, and determined to profit, as much as possible, by the opportunity offered him to supplant him in the affections of Ellen. Indeed, he began to flatter himself that this would not be a task of great difficulty, as it appeared to him incredible, that Richard's careless gayety of manner, his openness of heart, amounting sometimes to indiscretion, could be congenial to Ellen's feelings, or attractive to her fancy. Might she not, naturally, have accepted his offer as a refuge from the miseries of dependence? Was it unreasonable to suppose that she might prefer sharing a splendid fortune and a title with a man whose mind and manners were so much better suited to her own?

Thus Francis reasoned and felt, for his passion had so far overcome his cold and calculating ambition, that he was most desirous of forming an union, which but a few months since he would have regarded as utterly unworthy of him; and as these recollections often crossed his mind, he smiled with scorn at his own weakness, which had for the first time in his life, subdued him, when in opposition to considerations of worldly interest. He tried in various ways to work on Ellen's mind. Without adverting to Richard's plan of emigration, he would speak, with apparent feeling, of the love which binds us to the land of our birth, and would artfully suggest trains of thought to her mind, which awakened all the ideas of desolation which belong to exile and banishment. All this was done with consummate skill; nor did he betray by word or look, the secret triumph and joy he felt, when he saw Ellen's cheek turn pale, or her eyes fill with tears, during his discourses. This, then, he thought, is the right chord to touch, and with this power over her feelings, his own attractions and advantages, would render his triumph over his brother complete. He now every day manifested more unequivocal signs of attachment, but he took care that they should always seem to proceed rather from uncontrollable emotion than involuntarily betrayed itself, than from any wish to display his love.

Ellen was too noble, too single-minded herself, to suspect Lord Fitz-Clare's treacherous intentions; indeed, his delicate insinuations, his manifest signs of love and admiration, were either unnoticed by her, or ascribed to friendship and interest in his brother's betrothed. Her heart was wholly Richard Clifford's, and her thoughts were so much absorbed in the prospect of leaving England, crossing the trackless ocean, and settling in a wild and strange country, that she had little leisure for observing the emotions of others. Francis was greatly puzzled to discover whether Ellen understood his real feelings and designs; it was scarcely possible that she should not have perceived the signs of love and admiration, which he had taken so much pains to manifest, though never in a manner to be perceived by other observers than herself. The vanity inherent in human nature, must have led her to perceive and understand them, aided too by that tact which women are allowed to possess in an eminent degree—all these things led him to determine that Ellen Herbert must be acquainted with the state of his feelings. With this view of the subject, he justly considered it to be great encouragement to his designs, that he met with no positive discouragement. Ellen was always kind and gentle in her manner, and seemed to encourage rather than repress the habits of familiar and almost intimate intercourse into which they had fallen. But these days of delightful uncertainty drew to a close. A letter came from Richard Clifford to his brother, informing him that he should be in England in the course of two or three weeks, that all his arrangements with Mr. Mansel were concluded, and it was agreed that he should set out for Virginia as soon after his marriage as possible. The letter concluded with strong and ingenuous expressions of affection for his brother, without the slightest allusion to their last interview. Francis merely glanced his eye over this part of the letter in the most cursory manner; he was dismayed at the intelligence that Richard would return so speedily, and hastily crumpling up the letter, and putting it into his pocket, he determined to lose no time in putting his long meditated design into execution.

He sought Ellen, and found her alone in the library. His whole air and manner was that of one under the influence of

the most painful and uncontrollable emotion. Ellen looked at him with surprise and concern, then inquired in a tone of interest and kindness if any thing had happened to disturb him. She wished to ask if he had heard any news of his brother, and while she was devising some indirect method of making the inquiry, Francis commenced his declaration of love. It appeared rather wrung from him, at first, by the violence of his feelings, than to proceed from any deliberate intention ; but, as the French proverb says, "*c'est le premier pas que coute,*" having once commenced, he saw retreat would be unavailing, and he called to his aid all the eloquence, the arts of persuasion, the delicate flattery, in the use of which he was so well skilled. He paused. Ellen remained speechless and motionless as a statue. He mistook her calmness for acquiescence, and though his heart throbbed faster with pleasure, and his eye sparkled with triumph, yet even at this very moment a sensation of disappointment that Ellen had yielded without one struggle of principle or constancy, a vague suspicion, too, that his success might be owing rather to his rank and riches than to himself, mingled strangely with his joy.

Francis went on to say that he thought it impossible Ellen could ever have been happy, in an union with one whose mind was so uncongenial, whose character was so entirely dissimilar to her own, as Richard Clifford's ; and he, therefore, felt less remorse in urging her to break an engagement, the completion of which could be fraught only with misery to herself. "From his knowledge of Richard's character, of his levity and fickleness of disposition—" he would have continued and added still darker shades to the portrait of his brother, but just as he had uttered those words, Ellen rose, her eyes flashing with indignation, and her cheeks dyed with crimson.

"Stop," she said, in a voice which thrilled to Lord Fitz-Clare's heart, "I can not permit you any longer to dishonor yourself, to insult me, and to wrong your brother. You as little know my soul as I was acquainted with yours, but a few short hours ago. None but yourself could have torn the vail from my eyes ; I esteemed you as a friend, and had began to feel for you almost the affection of a sister."

Francis stood speechless, in his turn, with surprise, disappointment, wounded pride ; he scarcely knew at that minute whether he most loved or hated Ellen Herbert. The rapid alternations from the most deadly pale to the deepest crimson in a countenance which rarely betrayed emotion, showed the painful and strong feelings which were struggling, almost to suffocation, in his heart ! Ellen cast her eyes down with that sympathetic sort of shame, which persons of delicate sensibilities often feel for those who have committed a dishonorable action, in a much greater degree than they do for themselves. She said, in a firm yet sad tone, without raising her eyes to Lord Fitz-Claire's face, "Rest assured, that not one syllable of what has been said this morning shall ever pass my lips again. I would not wound so deeply your brother's noble and affectionate heart, for I know that he loves you with the most generous devotion ; nor would I," she added, in a gentler tone, "injure you, by such a disclosure, in the estimation of the world. A few weeks more, and we part, probably forever ; let us then part in peace. Any appearance of open rupture might give rise to painful surmises and suspicions. What sort of intercourse you may judge best for the sake of appearances to renew, after your brother's arrival, is at your own option ; for myself, my feelings are only those of sorrow that you are not what I took you to be. A few weeks hence, in less time even, perhaps, you will feel regret and surprise at what has passed ; regret that you should so far have forgotten every principle of honor or feeling of affection, surprise that you should ever have wished to form an union so unsuitable, so entirely destitute of all worldly advantages. I can scarcely suppose, after what has passed, you will remain longer in this place at present, so with sincere feelings of regret and forgiveness, I bid you farewell."

Ellen quitted the room immediately, before Francis could collect his thoughts, or regain his composure sufficiently to utter a word in his own defense, or make the slightest effort to detain her. Yet he felt a thorough conviction that his utmost eloquence would have been unavailing, and faithless as he was himself, he trusted with implicit confidence to Ellen's assurance, that she

would never communicate what had passed between them to any one. Bitter tears, the first he had shed since his childhood, forced themselves from his eyes; but even in this moment, when all the pangs of wounded pride, disappointed love, rage, jealousy, and revenge were rending his heart, it was some consolation that Ellen's promise would insure him against exposure, derision, and shame.

And Ellen had not only refused to share his title, his riches, but had actually forgiven the rich, the handsome, the graceful, the intellectual Lord Fitz-Clare for having been so dishonorable as to offer his hand; and promised to conceal what any other woman would have exulted in disclosing; and civilly but decidedly intimated that she wished him to leave the house immediately—and all for what? To share the desolations of banishment, the very mention of which drove the color from her cheek, with a man, too, in every respect his inferior. Stung to the soul at these thoughts, he rang the bell, ordered his horses immediately, left a note for Mr. Sedley, informing him that urgent business required his presence in London, jumped into his carriage, and was on the road to the metropolis as fast as his horses could carry him, chewing the cud of bitter fancies.

Richard Clifford returned at the appointed time; he learned, with much satisfaction, from Mr. Sedley's family, that his brother had become an inmate of the house during his absence, and Mary Sedley assured him Lord Fitz-Clare and Ellen seemed to fancy each other prodigiously. He thought it particularly kind in Francis, thus voluntarily to seek an acquaintance with Ellen, and imagined this conduct evinced a true and tender interest in his happiness. Yet it was strange, very strange, he sometimes thought, that now, when they were on the very eve of departure, his brother should suggest no plan, offer no assistance to detain them. Perhaps, however, he would add mentally, Francis thought with Mr. Mansel, that a few years of exertion, in a country, too, where he would be removed from the temptations of fashionable life, would give him more consistency and steadiness of character. This was so often repeated, that he finally adopted this view of the subject, as affording the most satisfactory solution of his brother's conduct.

Richard thanked Lord Fitz-Clare with such affectionate warmth, for the kindness and attention he had shown Ellen during his absence, that he felt his color change in spite of himself. But if a transient emotion of shame was excited in the breast of Francis, it was instantly succeeded by the wish to deprive Richard of the triumph of supposing himself possessed of Ellen's affections. He spoke of the very painful situation in which she was placed in Mr. Sedley's family, to which almost any change, to a person of her character, must be a relief: then he adverted to having occasionally surprised her in tears; from which facts he artfully sought to lead Richard to the inference that she was far from happy, and had consented to marry him, rather as an escape from greater evils than from love. To aid in producing the impression he wished on Richard's mind, he expressed surprise, in the most natural manner imaginable, that Ellen should be so sad, when about to be united to a man she loved, adding, that it was true he was quite ignorant in such matters, but he had always supposed successful love to be attended with exhilarating rather than depressing effects. He tried to infuse these suspicions into Richard's mind, like a poisonous drug, which, once administered, will, if left to itself, work out its deleterious influence.

But Richard possessed an unsuspiciousness of temper, which often accompanies a consciousness of honor and truth, together with a confidence in Ellen's love and truth, which could only have been overthrown by proofs "strong as holy writ," that repelled, like an armor of steel, the deadly arrows of distrust.

Lord Fitz-Clare excused himself, under pretense of indisposition, from being present at the marriage ceremony, but he judged it necessary, for the sake of appearances, to wait on Ellen previous to their embarkation for Virginia. The effects of the best and worst motives are often so exactly similar in appearance, that no eye but His before whom the secrets of all hearts are laid open, can detect that they proceed from the opposite sources of good and evil. Lord Fitz-Clare and Ellen met again, for the first and last time since their interview in the library, with a graceful and dignified composure, which each of the parties thought aston-

ishing and admirable in the other. For there is something in the exercise of unusual self-command, from whatever motive, which strong minds must respect. They know how to appreciate the exertion such an effort costs, and that this power, properly directed, enables men to perform the most sublime acts of heroism ; and to this mental power they involuntarily yield a portion of esteem.

Ellen bade adieu to every dear and well-known object, to every familiar face, with the feelings of those about to close their eyes on this world forever, but with an appearance of calmness, which was mistaken by many for insensibility. But as the shores of England receded from her view, it seemed as if she again passed through the agony of separation from her father, her brother, from all that she had ever held dear, but him who stood beside her, regarding her with a glance of tender and thoughtful sadness. Ellen attempted to extend her hand toward Richard, as if to assure him that even in this hour of sorrow, she made the sacrifice willingly for his sake, when a sudden shivering and faintness came over her whole frame, and she sunk for some minutes into a state of insensibility.

When she recovered her consciousness, she exerted a strong effort to maintain her composure. She turned her eyes from the sea, and from this time avoided all mention of England. She asked Richard many questions in which she felt little real interest, as to the country to which they were bound ; he was delighted at her apparent cheerfulness, and entered into the most animated and interesting details of all he had heard and read respecting Virginia. He expatiated on the pleasures of a free and unsophisticated life, the novelty, the excitement, the freshness of feeling which would be possessed, by throwing off the forms, prejudices, and abuses of an artificial and luxurious state of society. Then he enlarged on the magnificence of the forests, the brilliancy of the flowers, the beauties of the bright and numerous birds, and the mildness of the climate. Ellen listened and smiled, but thought in her heart how gladly she would have exchanged all this fertility, beauty, and freedom for the barrenest common in England.

CHAPTER III.

O, Nannie, when thou'rt far away
Wilt thou not cast a wish behind,
Say, canst thou face the parching ray,
Nor shrink before the wintry wind.
O can that soft and gentle mien,
Extremes of hardship learn to bear,
Nor sad regret each courtly scene,
Where thou wert fairest of the fair?

PERCY.

ALL things must end, and so at last did the dreary voyage of our passengers across the Atlantic. The tract of land of which Richard Clifford had become proprietor, was situated in one of the most fertile regions of the James River Valley. Our travelers landed at Jamestown, then a village, and a place of some importance, from the circumstance of its having been the first town settled by the English in the United States. Ellen smiled with delight, and even with surprise, to see a church steeple, to hear the well known accents of her native tongue, and to see herself surrounded by faces bearing the stamp of English descent.

It is true, her mind had been instructed to expect these things, but the operations of reason are so much slower than those of imagination, that it is long before they can counteract their influences. She had read, heard, and believed in the progress of refinement in Virginia, but it was only to close the book, to pause in the conversation, and with the very thought of Virginia, there arose in her mind instantly ideas of tangled and interminable forests, of rush huts, of Indian wigwams, tomahawks, scalping-knives, convicts, and all the outcasts of society, for which newly established colonies offer refuge and protection. It was no sooner rumored in the village that a lady and gentleman had arrived from home, as England was then termed in Virginia, than the few gentlemen who resided in Jamestown, vied with each other in demonstrations of hospitality. Indeed they all entreated Richard and Ellen with so much

sincere warmth to accompany them to their homes, that there was great difficulty in making a selection among offers so kind and pressing. Mr. Granville, however, was so very earnest in his invitation, as to bear down all opposition, and succeeded in bearing the strangers home with him in triumph.

They were received by Mrs. Granville, who was a Virginian by birth, with something of that sort of shyness, which is so difficult to throw off, by persons who possess cultivated minds and refined feeling, but who have rarely had opportunities of intercourse with polished society. There is a strange and painful confusion in the minds of such persons, as to what ought to be, and what really are the usages of *good society*—that bugbear to the uninitiated, which, like a will-o'-the-wisp, often leads its deluded followers into the saddest and most perplexing embarrassments. It has been said,

“That fools rush in, where angels dare not tread,”

and the truth of this is never more strikingly exemplified than in what is emphatically termed *society*. Low-bred and ignoble persons, possessing some degree of *natural* confidence, when placed in situations where a knowledge of the forms and ceremonies of politeness is necessary, extricate themselves with far less suffering both to themselves and the spectators, than those whose minds are sufficiently enlightened, and their tastes refined enough to perceive the thousand shoals and quicksands which lie in their way, without knowledge to enable them to avoid them. Imagination, it is true, multiplies these dangers a thousand fold, and the sensitive, too, greatly magnify their importance; for after all, what is the essence of *all true* politeness, but delicacy, gentleness, and kindness manifested in various ways, according to the manners and customs of different nations. Persons possessed of these qualities, have nothing to fear, but the phantoms of their own imaginations; they have sterling coin which passes current every where; and for a failure in mere outward forms and conventional observances, which are constantly varying, none but the *high-bred* vulgar would observe or ridicule them.

Mrs. Granville reasoned but did not feel thus; yet her shy and

uncomfortable feelings wore off under the united influence of Ellen's unassuming gentleness, and Richard's easy, yet respectful gayety. There was no assumption of superiority, no appearance of condescension, and she felt the magical effect of good manners, in restoring her ease, and unconsciously raising her own estimation of herself. Ellen soon saw flowers springing up under the snow, and they were not less interesting in their wild and native freshness, than the blossoms of the parterre or trim flower-garden. She was pleased with Mrs. Granville's warmth of heart, with the originality and simplicity of her observations, and the native delicacy with which she avoided awakening recollections in her mind which might be painful to the heart of an exile. On the other hand, Mrs. Granville felt her heart drawn toward Ellen with a sort of love and admiration as to a being of superior order; she had never before seen so lovely, so refined, and so polished a woman as Ellen Clifford.

Mr. Granville too, though not so enthusiastic in his admiration as his wife, was much interested in the society of the strangers, both from the charms of **their** conversation, and the endearing circumstance of their coming **from** home; for he, too, was a native of England, though he had been for many years a resident in Virginia. It was utterly impossible to quit this hospitable mansion for many days, for at every proposal Richard made to take possession of his own abode, he was entreated with so much kindness and unaffected earnestness to stay a few days longer, that he could not find resolution to say no. Mr. Granville, at length, yielded unwillingly to the representations which Richard Clifford made of the imperious necessity, which demanded that he should take the management of **affairs**, at once, into his own hands; but he insisted strenuously **if they** should find themselves uncomfortably situated, they should consent to become his inmates, until the spring of the year, when by that time, things might be better arranged for their accommodation.

As no one knew better than Richard Clifford how to confer a favor, so no one better understood how to receive one. He showed the most grateful appreciation of the kindness of this offer, but urged so many **good** reasons for refusing it, that Mr. Granville,

who was a reasonable man when his prejudices were not concerned, acquiesced, though Mrs. Granville could not be convinced of the necessity of their removal. Since, however, it must be so, Mr. Granville aided Richard Clifford in hiring and borrowing conveyances (for the former was greatly more difficult than the latter) to carry to his place of abode the few simple articles of furniture he had brought with him from England, and which had been deposited in a warehouse in Jamestown. Mr. Granville's coach-and-four, then a rare article of luxury, possessed only by a few rich planters, was in readiness, by sunrise the following morning, to convey Richard and Ellen to their new home, as it was a long day's drive, and a journey of forty or fifty miles was then considered a serious undertaking.

Our travelers found the table spread, even at this early hour, with a real Highland breakfast—fish, wild-fowl, dried venison, eggs, a variety of hot bread, tea and coffee. Ellen was much disturbed to find that Mrs. Granville had been up two or three hours before, to give them what she called a comfortable breakfast; there was, however, not the slightest trace of hurry or discomposure visible on her countenance, as she appeared to think what Ellen considered quite an extraordinary and unnecessary exertion, a mere matter of course. "On hospitable thoughts intent," Mrs. Granville proceeded, after they had breakfasted, to pack a large basket with a sufficient profusion and variety of food to have fed them for a week, saying that it would be impossible to procure a dinner on the road, and that they would not arrive until night at their place of abode. She seemed to find so much pleasure in performing these little offices of kindness, that Ellen ceased to offer any remonstrances, and quietly permitted her to trouble herself in every way she could desire for their accommodation, as she perceived this was the most effectual means of comforting her for their departure.

Yet all Mrs. Granville's efforts would not do to preserve her composure; when the hour of parting arrived, her eyes filled with tears, notwithstanding her fear Mr. Granville would think her foolish, when she received Ellen's parting kiss accompanied with few simple yet feeling words of acknowledgment for the sisterly

kindness with which she had treated a stranger. Mrs. Granville, in vain, attempted to reply, she returned in silence the pressure of Richard's hand, and ashamed of her own emotions, putting a handkerchief to her eyes, she hastily retreated to her own room, where she continued to wave adieus to her guests, and watch the carriage until it was out of sight. Ellen continued to return her signals, until a turn of the road hid the form of her friend from her sight, when drawing a sigh, she leaned back in the carriage, and met Richard's eyes, fixed with a smiling glance on her face.

"After all," said he, "these Virginians are not such barbarians as we had supposed, or, rather as a certain lady of my acquaintance had suggested, for my judgments were somewhat more charitable."

"Indeed, I blush at my own ignorance and illiberality, yet I can not help thinking, Mrs. Granville must be a rare specimen of national character. She unites to the refinement and delicacy of an Englishwoman, the Irish warmth and vivacity of feeling, with genuine Highland hospitality."

"Then as she is a charming mixture of the good qualities of the three first nations in the world, in our opinion at least, she must be superior even to an Englishwoman," said Richard, smiling.

"Ah, you shall never draw me into such a heresy as that. Mrs. Granville, though possessed of excellent sense, and various information gathered from desultory reading, as well as the rich stores accumulated by the workings of a strong and reflective mind, still wants advantages of education and society, which can not be found any where in such perfection as in England. The material, as the French say, is as fine as it can be any where, but it is not so well worked up."

"That, I will not deny; for charming as Mrs. Granville is, I must acknowledge I am acquainted with an English lady who is greatly her superior, whether owing to art or nature, I leave to her own decision."

"It is well, at least, that you should think so," answered Ellen with a smile, "and therefore, I will not attempt to prove the contrary."

It was toward the end of October, just at that season called by the natives, the Indian Summer : a golden mist threw its softened glories over the splendid autumnal tints of the magnificent and boundless forests which lay around them. Ellen had often admired the sad and sober beauties of an English autumn, whose brown tints, and sere and yellow leaves speak to the heart of change and death, for even with the sadness of these images there is a pensive pleasure, a mysterious interest, from the analogy which all reflective minds feel between the changes of the natural and spiritual world. But it was scarcely possible to connect ideas of sadness or decay with the gorgeous magnificence of coloring, which a Virginian autumn presented, for the first time, to her delighted and wondering view. The crimson foliage of the oak mingled in bright contrast with the golden leaves of the tulip-tree and the beech ; and every tint of color, from the most glowing to the darkest and richest shades imaginable, mingled so as to produce a splendor of effect, of which the most brilliant colors of the painter could give only a poor and imperfect idea. The various forms, too, of the trees, the grandeur of their size—the growth of centuries, undisturbed by the hand of man—excited in the minds of our travelers, a feeling of admiration not unmingled with awe, which a sight of the magnificent operations of nature on a grand scale, is so apt to call forth.

Here and there a cultivated field was seen intervening between the forests, but this only made it more apparent, what must be the magnitude of an undertaking to clear, plant, and cultivate such a country. What had been done, impressed one but more strongly with the idea of how much more remained to be done, and impressed the hearts of our travelers with a painful sense of loneliness, as they involuntarily contrasted these patches of cultivated ground, surrounded by wild and tangled forests, with the gay and garden-like appearance of merry Old England. But sadness in Richard's mind, was only the light and fleeting cloud, which passes over the sun, obscuring it for a minute, but to make its returning brightness more glorious. Thoughts of a more cheerful kind again presented themselves, and he began to point out to Ellen the various birds that enlivened the forests

with their cheerful notes, airy motions, and bright plumage, the rich profusion of asters, varying in tint from the palest lilac to the brightest azure and most glowing purple, mingling their hues in beautiful contrast with those of the inula and golden-rod.

The coachman smiled at Richard's request that he would stop and let him gather some of those beautiful flowers that grew by the road-side ; and his amusement increased at the delight with which Ellen received what he had always been accustomed to consider as weeds. It was long after sunset before they arrived at their place of abode, and Ellen was glad Richard could not see her face, when, after jolting over stumps up to the very door, they stopped before a small and rudely-built wooden house, without one sign of comfort or neatness about it. It was the house in which Mr. Carlton, the manager, though the term was rather a misnomer, resided ; and he waited Richard's arrival, to give an account of his stewardship, and render up all the affairs of the estate into his hands. The coach stopped with a tremendous jolt just at the door of a little entrance, which Mr. Carlton dignified with the name of a porch, though it certainly bore no sort of resemblance in structure to any thing Ellen had ever heard called by this name before.

They entered into the dining-room, as Mr. Carlton called it, though this term very inadequately expressed the various uses and purposes of this apartment ; the furniture of which consisted in some painted pine tables, a few flag-bottomed chairs, a gun in the corner, a stuffed fox's skin, the antlers of a deer hanging on the wall, and a shelf over the chimney, on which lay a twist of tobacco, some ears of corn, and a volume on farming. A single tallow-candle shed a dim light over the room.

Mr. Carlton quitted the room, after having conducted them into it, in a great bustle, to see, he said, that their horses were properly fed, and that the cook made haste with supper, as he was sure they must be hungry after their long day's drive. Richard did not oppose his hospitable designs, as he was glad to be relieved of his presence ; he looked at Ellen, and the contrast between her home in London, and her present situation struck his mind most painfully.

"Ellen," said he, in a serious tone, as he took her hand gently within his own, "I was never fully aware until to-night how much I asked, when I requested you to leave England, and to suffer all the hardships of a residence in the New World for my sake."

Ellen looked in his face with a sweet, yet reproachful smile. "What strange creatures men are!" she said. "You pity me more for sitting on a flag chair and eating ~~on~~ a pine table, than for severing the ties of country and crossing the ocean; though this and more I would do again for your sake, without adverting to the selfish consideration that my own happiness was likewise somewhat concerned, which certainly impairs the merit of the sacrifice. But the best men can not completely understand a woman's nature; it is impossible to destroy in their minds the ideas which the stories and ballads they hear in childhood, the novels and plays they read in maturer life, form and strengthen, that the happiness of woman depends chiefly on external things."

"Well, I am glad you have composure enough to philosophize, and spirit enough to reproach me, and still more, I thank you for saying that you would suffer all you have done again for my sake; it shall be my care, my pride, my happiness, to make you all the amends for these sacrifices in my power, and to lessen the hardships and inconveniences to which you are exposed. Indeed I have already thought of a plan—"

"Oh, let us spare our poor brains all plots and contrivances for to-night," said Ellen, laughing, "and limit our plans to procuring a supper. Mrs. Granville furnished us with provisions for two or three days, at least, I believe, and I am ashamed to confess with how much pleasure I remember the basket contained a parcel of tea and loaf-sugar. Do you now quiet Mr. Carlton's anxieties, by letting him know of our stores, and that no exertion will be necessary on his part but to make his cook boil the tea-kettle."

Richard laughed with that joyous and silvery tone, which showed that his good spirits were quite restored, and went immediately to execute Ellen's orders. The bright smile, with which she greeted his return was like a sun-beam to his soul, and he felt that a contented mind and affectionate heart could find happiness, even when external things were most unpromising.

CHAPTER IV.

Time rolls ~~his~~ ceaseless course. The race of yore,
Who danced in infancy upon our knee,
And told our marveling boyhood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How they are blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak, and withered of their force,
Wait, on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls its ceaseless course.

SCOTT.

YEARS passed away, and time moved with still and gentle tread, yet the trace of his footsteps was apparent in the changes wrought by the taste of Ellen and the industry of Richard Clifford around their place of abode. Not far from their first dwelling, on a gentle elevation which commanded a beautiful view of magnificent forests, softly undulating hills, and the waters of the James River flowing through a country whose luxuriant growth and variety of outline is said to bear a strong resemblance to the rich scenery on the Loire and Garonne, was erected a commodious brick mansion of handsome proportions, with a portico and balcony in front. The balcony, it is true, was unfinished, some of the ornaments designed for the door-ways had not yet been procured from England, and much of the ornamental work which was to have adorned the interior of the mansion was left in an unfinished state, owing to the difficulty, vexation, and expense necessarily attendant on building with materials which were to be brought across the Atlantic: yet in all the essentials of comfort the house was by no means deficient; and Richard laughed at the incongruities which were somewhat annoying to the nicer eye and more fastidious taste of Ellen.

The rough sward had given way to the green turf, shrubs of various kinds grew in their native beauty and luxuriance, but

the pride of Ellen's heart and the source of some of her purest joys, was a small and tasteful flower-garden, where she reared and cherished the flowers of her native land. No shrub or flower, however beautiful, which she had not learned to love in England, found entrance in this sanctuary of the heart. Here as she inhaled the fragrance of the sweet honeysuckle, still called in Virginia English honeysuckle, or plucked the bright king-cup or pale primrose, Ellen felt for a few short moments as if she were restored to the land of her love—that land which the sad and stern lessons of reason told her she must never more hope to revisit. Ellen was not naturally of a sanguine temperament, and the trials of her early life had taught her to struggle with and subdue hopes, which were not founded on reason, whenever they arose in her mind, but her feelings were lasting as life itself, though she learned so to conceal and govern them, as to prevent their interfering with the happiness and interest of her family.

She saw that Richard was happy, and though he thought of England with pride and affection, still his attachment grew every day stronger to the land of his adoption. He looked around on the broad fields, waving with luxuriant crops of wheat and Indian-corn, cleared and planted by his own exertions, where once had stood wild and tangled woods; he contrasted the dreary, wild, and almost savage appearance of their abode on the first night of their arrival, with the neatness, comfort, and beauty of their present establishment; he had indeed made the "wilderness rejoice and blossom as the rose," and the animating reflection that this was the work of his own hands, mingled with gratitude to the Giver of all Good, who had thus blessed his exertions. Success with him always awakened new and stronger hopes, and a bright vista of new acquirements, new enjoyments, new improvements always lengthened before him. With Richard Clifford the desire for wealth was only a desire for more abundant means of conferring happiness around him, for it might have been said of him without poetic hyperbole, "He had an eye for piety, and a hand, open as day to melting charity." His activity of mind and joyousness of heart diffused their glad and ennobling influences on all around; and there was no plan of gener-

osity or usefulness in the neighborhood, in which Ellen or himself were not connected, or which might not be traced in some way to their influence.

It is the noblest, the highest, the most spiritual kind of virtue, which like the seraph Abdiel, is "faithful found among the faithless;" which can preserve its loyalty, "among innumerable false, unshaken, unseduced, unterrified;" which can raise its aspirations above the darkness and gloom that are sometimes permitted entirely to envelop our earthly path, to the glorious Source of Goodness and Truth, and can believe, that its light though obscured to us is not extinguished, and with firm and patient step trace the path of duty, though every footstep should be marked with blood. But there are few, very few, who can thus walk through storms and darkness without, and lose not the internal light of faith and hope; and blessed, thrice blessed in this world, are they, whom God permits to feel that they are instruments in his hand of diffusing happiness and good around them. Richard Clifford felt this happiness with the full gladness of a generous nature; and he might have said with Job, "When the eye saw me it blessed me. And when the ear heard me it gave witness unto me."

There was no husband so kind, no father so fond; no master so indulgent, and yet, wisely so; no neighbor so generous, so indefatigable in his exertions to promote the general welfare, as Richard Clifford. And few indeed had greater cause for happiness than himself, not only in worldly prosperity, for this was to him but as a straw in the balance, compared with the pure and deep bliss which he found in the bosom of his family. Few fathers had more reason for pride, if such a feeling can ever be permitted to poor mortals, than himself, as he looked around on a lovely group of three children, each of which, in their turn, seemed loveliest to their father's eye. Three children of the same parents could scarcely, however, have been more different; and except for that mysterious resemblance which is found, in some degree, among all the members of the same family, even though we can not define in what it exists, they would scarcely have been recognized as children of the same parents.

William, who was the eldest of these three children, possessed

much of the spirit and animation of his father's face, mingled with the gentle and pensive beauty of his mother's countenance—the gay smile and open brow of his father, the long silken eyelash, the dark and thoughtful eye of his mother. He was a frank and noble boy, fixed in his purposes, almost to obstinacy, yet kind and gentle in his ordinary demeanor. Ellen, the elder of the two girls, was generally pronounced, by strangers, to be very interesting in appearance, but it required some acquaintance with her to discover that she was, at times, surpassingly lovely. Her spirits were not so joyous, or her health so vigorous as William's or Sophia's, and there was at times a paleness, a languor, a thoughtfulness in her countenance, that excited tenderness and interest, and which drew her more closely to the heart of her mother than her other children, though she scarcely acknowledged, even to herself, any difference of feeling, and was far too wise and kind to permit it to become apparent in her conduct.

Indeed, Ellen's health was so delicate, her feelings so quick and keen, her temper so gentle, that every one seemed to feel that she was entitled to peculiar kindness and consideration. Her father's tone was always softest when addressed to her; her brother's plays and jests were gentler and kinder; and the tone of reproof which her mother sometimes used toward the other children, was gentle admonition when addressed to her; for she saw how deep and painful was the impression which one harsh word made on her young mind, and felt with sad foreboding, what a store of sorrow might await a heart with such capacities of enjoyment and suffering—for, alas! how many, many events of life are calculated to pierce and wound a heart, even of ordinary sensibility.

Sophia had regular features, bright complexion, laughing blue eyes, and a profusion of light brown hair, which fell in ringlets about her brow and neck. She was playful, intelligent, and affectionate, always ready with a smile or a jest, and the sunshine of her little breast was scarcely ever obscured, even by a passing cloud. Every thing furnished amusement to this joyous child, and it was scarcely possible to confine her attention to a task or any thing like regular employment, though her apprehension was

quick, and her understanding good. And while William would sit for hours reading the Lives of Plutarch, and with kindling eye and glowing cheek, think how he should one day emulate the deeds he now read of with that pure and enthusiastic admiration, which no one felt so strongly as the noble boy, who knew not yet how much base alloy mingles with those actions, which he fondly imagines flow unmingled with earthly pollution from the divine fountain of virtue ; while Ellen sat rapt over some old ballad or tale of legendary lore, forgetting in the visions of fancy, now bright, now sad, which these tales called forth, almost her own existence ; Sophia was bounding like a fawn over the grass, now chasing a butterfly, now plucking a flower, or pursuing an indefatigable search for birds' nests—only, however, for the pleasure of peeping into them, for the idea of robbing them would never have entered her kind little heart.

Though shut out from what is called society, a term difficult to define, and still more difficult to understand, in all that relates to the moral and intellectual education of human beings, in all that tends to ennoble the mind and impart that natural grace and courtesy, which spring from refined tastes and kindly hearts, these children were possessed of very unusual advantages. They had access to a well-chosen, if not very extensive library, and though they wanted the variety and amusement afforded by the fashionable novels and various periodicals of the present day, which serve to while away many a tedious hour, and furnish light and various themes of conversation, still it might be questioned whether they were not rather gainers than losers by their deprivation. Their literary tastes were formed from noble and classic models, and they learned to think and speak in pure native English, in Saxon strength and simple beauty, undefiled by that jargon of foreign phrases and new-coined words, which every writer ~~now~~ thinks himself at liberty to manufacture for his own use, until one almost imagines, in reading the strange motley of words, that a confusion of tongues has again taken place on the earth.

Mr. Walton, a worthy old Englishman, who had been Richard Clifford's tutor at college, and had devoted himself to literature,

to the exclusion of all domestic ties and worldly pursuits—and, strange to say, found in it its own reward, but, not very strange to remark, had found in it no other—had yielded to Richard's friendly and earnest solicitations, that he should come to Virginia and superintend the education of his children. In carrying his books, he carried his world with him; and, moreover, he had felt a stronger attachment to Richard Clifford, than he had ever felt for any one else, since he had lost the first friends of his childhood—an event which had taken place early in life. He found in the house of his old pupil a home indeed; and he was surprised himself to perceive the strong feelings of interest and affection which the lovely children, whose education was intrusted to him, excited in his mind. He knew not even that the germs of such feelings as they awakened, existed in his breast, so long had they been buried in his heart without giving signs of life, and he perceived their existence with pleasure, not unmixed with alarm, particularly when he detected himself closing a volume of Plato, involuntarily to listen to the ballad, which Ellen sang at his side in a low, sweet tone.

It will never do, he thought, to be so childish; these things distract a man from his studies, and he resolutely re-opened the volume. But William just then entered with some wild-flowers, which Mr. Walton had expressed a desire to examine, for he had studied botany among other pursuits; and Sophia playfully held a ripe peach to his lips, saying, "Eat this, Mr. Walton, it is the first ripe peach from my own tree; I have been watching it for two days." He was fairly conquered, and once more closing the book, yielded, not however without some shame, to the earnest and united request of the children, that he would take a long, pretty walk with them. The respect and affection with which Richard and Ellen treated Mr. Walton, the kindness and attention with which they humored his peculiarities and considered his tastes, not only contributed to his happiness, but raised him in his own estimation, and made him feel, that there was something else in the world, as well as books, worth living for.

The work of instruction was now lightened and sweetened by love, and Mr. Walton, with unwearied patience, sought to instill

into the minds of his young pupils these hard-earned lessons of knowledge, for which he had willingly renounced all this world's gear, all this world's honor, and watched through many a weary night, and shut himself up in the gloom and dust of his library through many a bright day, denying himself the balmy influences of air and sunshine. He had not yet learned that the pursuit of knowledge, for its own sake exclusively, without any reference to the benefits which it enables us to confer upon others, is only one of the many imposing and noble disguises which selfishness assumes ; but he felt now, for the first time, the pleasure of imparting this precious gift to others, and any thing which makes a man feel pleasure in benefiting his fellow creatures, exerts an ennobling and renewing influence on his mind, and forms a new era in his existence.

Ellen and William imbibed his lessons with that thirst for truth, which makes tasks easy and labor light in pursuit of knowledge ; and even Sophia chained her buoyant spirits to the oar with more patience than could possibly have been expected ; in consideration whereof Mr. Walton granted her frequent petitions to run about in the yard a little, that she might get her lessons better when she came back, as she was getting sleepy and tired.

It was their mother's care to add the lighter and more graceful branches to the tree of knowledge ; while their father talked to the children of men and manners, and by the charms of gay, varied, and intelligent conversation, imparted many an useful lesson. With his direction and assistance, William became, too, an expert angler, a skillful marksman, a firm and graceful rider ; often, too, he assisted his father in his agricultural labor, or in the transaction of business, and thus early formed manly and independent habits of acting and thinking, even while yet a boy in years. Thus days, weeks, and months glided by, and each season brought its appropriate duties and pleasures to this family of peace and love.

CHAPTER V.

And will I see his face again?
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy with the thought;
In troth I'm like to greet.

It was on a lovely summer evening, as the setting sun cast his beams of softened glory on all surrounding objects, and gorgeous clouds of purple and gold floated on the sky, in a thousand fanciful and changing forms, that Ellen Clifford repaired to her favorite retreat, a bower in her garden, shaded thickly with honeysuckles and roses. Here she sate, forgetful of the present scene, while days of langsyne arose, with all the vividness of reality, to her mind; again she seemed to hear the tones of her father's voice, the gay laugh of her young brother; and the cottage in which they had lived, stood before her, with its white walls and flowering vines. She was so absorbed in these meditations, that she did not know there was a human being near her, until Richard had taken his seat beside her.

His whole face beamed with an expression of irrepressible joy, as he said, in a gay tone, "You **can** not think, Ellen, how charmingly you personify *Il Penseroso*; but yet I can not indulge you in these musings any longer."

Ellen started with a short, quick sigh, like one awakened from a dream, and looked toward him, as if the sound but not the sense of his speech had reached her ear, though she was somewhat surprised at the unusual expression of gladness, which irradiated his whole countenance.

"Come," said Richard, with that clear, musical laugh which makes the hearer laugh involuntarily from sympathy, "let me read your thoughts, and tell me, if I read aright. Are you not thinking this is a very good, kind, sort of a man, in his way, but his mirth is sometimes very unseasonable, or to say the least, very

unsentimental, and he wants that refined sort of sympathy, which enables us to understand, as if by intuition, the emotions of others. Yet he is not altogether to blame either, for it is quite impossible that any man should thoroughly appreciate and sympathize with a woman's feelings?"

Ellen smiled, and laid her hand gently on his, "Read again, Richard, for you have not read aright, except in the conclusion of your speech, which you have fully justified by the beginning of it. You certainly do not understand or appreciate my feelings, if you read them thus; but you laugh on, almost without listening to me. Tell me what has happened to please you so much?"

"Guess then, Ellen; of all events that could happen, what would contribute most to your happiness? I know that you can bear the trials of adversity, but it is sometimes necessary to bear joy, as well as sorrow, with composure."

Ellen looked at him with a glance of eager inquiry, and her color went and came, now deepening into crimson, now leaving her cheek pale as marble, with a rapidity which terrified Richard, as she said, in as steady a tone as she could command: "I have a great deal to make me thankful, and am already happy far beyond the lot of ordinary mortals, in you and in my children; there is but one more earthly blessing which could add very greatly to my happiness, and it would be foolish, unreasonable, to hope—"

"Oh, it is never foolish or unreasonable to hope; only tell me what it is."

"My brother, my poor George," said Ellen, almost inarticulately, and her eyes were riveted on Richard's face, as if to read her fate there.

"What would you say, Ellen, to his coming over to these wild woods, to pitch his tent among us, to live and die with us?"

"Impossible," said Ellen, almost gasping for breath; "surely, Richard, you would not trifle with me on a subject such as this."

"Surely not, Ellen," replied Richard, in a tone of seriousness, "only as it is the first mystery I have ever had with you, I mean that it shall be the last, for I find that I am a complete bungler

in the denouement of my plot. But you must first learn to believe that ~~there is~~ nothing too good to hope, in the course of God's kind providence.

"Thank God!" said Ellen, in a voice stifled with emotion, and she hid her face with her hands, while warm tears of gladness gushed to her eyes, and trickled fast through her slender fingers. "And you, dear Richard," she added, "how good, how kind you always are! How little have I deserved such blessings as I have met with!"

"I will not presume to say how far mortal virtue, however spotless in our eyes, can merit the blessing of an All-pure God, but surely, from me Ellen, you have more than merited my utmost exertions to render you happy. Compose yourself, and let me tell my story to an end—the how, the why, and all about it."

Ellen wiped away the tears that streamed down her face, and said, in a firmer tone, "I am composed, only tell me quickly."

"Very composed indeed!" answered Richard with a smile, and he entered on his narrative: "You doubtless recollect the letters, received some months ago, from your brother, written in a desponding strain, and stating that, in consequence of ill health, he had been permitted to retire from the service on half pay, for some months. He seemed too, you know, much irritated and wounded from the unjust treatment he had met with from his commanding officer. At the same time his letters arrived, I also received a letter from one of my early friends in Scotland, who appears much attached to your brother, giving an account of his situation, which greatly increased my interest in him, and first gave me the idea of making the proposal to him to come to Virginia, which has terminated so successfully. My friend described him as struggling under the dispiriting influences of disease, of wounded pride and honor, while he was undergoing a severe conflict between the feelings of long and devoted love, and the principle which forbade him to declare it, even though he knew it to be returned, lest it should involve her whom he loved in all the hardships and trials of poverty.

"For this trait I loved him, for I recognized him by this as the brother of my Ellen, who with the same noble and mistaken

feeling would have sacrificed my happiness, far dearer to her than her own, at the shrine of principle. But as I am no lover of sacrifices, when they can be avoided, however noble they may be, I began to revolve in my mind how it could be prevented ; and the idea of contributing to your happiness, I must confess, was even a stronger motive with me than benefiting him, though this too, I ardently desired. I remembered the fine tract of land, which I added last year to my possessions by a very advantageous purchase, and it occurred to me that your brother might be persuaded to cultivate this for some years, during which the profits accruing from it, would be so considerable as to enable him to throw off the yoke of obligation, and purchase either this, or other land, as he liked. It is generally thought a mark of generosity to confer obligations, but I have always thought it requires a nobler and rarer generosity to receive favors with that noble and modest grace, which shows at once, a gratifying appreciation of the motives of the donor, and a soul to which generous feelings are so familiar, that it knows how much more blessed it is to give than to receive.

"In just such a spirit as this, is your brother's acceptance of my proposal expressed, in the letter I have just received ; and, to crown my satisfaction, he informs me that he is to be united to the lady of his love, previously to embarkation."

Ellen listened without interrupting him, and replied for some minutes only by a gentle pressure of his hand, then said, "This is almost too much happiness."

Long did they talk, until the last gleam of twilight had disappeared in the west, and the moon rose with that rich yellow light with which it sometimes shines in southern climates ; and longer their conversation would have continued, had not Sophia, impatient of their long delay, at length interrupted them by a petition from Ellen that they would come in, as the dew was very heavy. "Besides," added the little girl, "we have been waiting supper a long, long time, mamma. Ellen said you must not be interrupted, and poor Mr. Walton and William look very tired."

Every day was now passed in the flutter of expectation, and Ellen imagined to herself a thousand times, the changes which

time must have wrought in the fair, delicate, bright-hearted boy, from whom she had parted so many years since with bitter tears. But all the various images which her fancy formed little prepared her for the reality, when she saw the work which the magician Time had wrought in her brother, whose image had so often visited her waking thoughts and nightly dreams. All the composure, which she had struggled so severely to maintain, utterly forsook her, as she cast her eyes on the pale cheek, the deep lines planted rather by care than time, the smile, sad though sweet, that played about his lips, which told so moving a tale of all he had seen and suffered since she had parted with him under her father's roof, a bright and joyous boy, that, throwing her arms around his neck, she lifted up her voice and wept aloud. It was the overflowing voice of nature, and there was not a dry eye among the spectators of this scene; all the past seemed to the brother and sister to have vanished, and Ellen and George seemed once more to stand on their father's threshold, as in the last sad day of their parting; and again to hear the faltering tones of his voice saying: "Farewell, my son, may God bless you, and reunite us in a better world if no more in this! Oh, do not break my heart, my children, by weeping thus!"

Even Sophia's smiles were changed to tears, though she knew not why, and wondered that her mother should be so sorry to see Uncle George, after having watched for him so long, and having wished so much that he would come. When Ellen's composure was sufficiently restored to observe Mrs. Herbert's appearance and manner, she experienced a sensation not unlike disappointment, though she could scarcely have accounted for the feeling, for she had certainly a decided air of gentility, and would have been pronounced by most persons handsome. There was, too, a propriety, a self-possession about her, which inspired respect, but her whole countenance and manner showed that she was a stranger to that overflow of heart, which, sweeping away the barriers of custom and reserve in circumstances calculated to produce unusual emotion, performs in hours the work of years, and awakens at once, in a kindred heart, that strong affection, which is generally the slow growth of time and circumstances.

Few have imaginations so dull, as not to form some picture in their minds, of those who have claims to their love, previously to their having ever seen them ; and it is seldom, very seldom, when the ideal representation is displaced by reality, that we do not experience a blank sensation of surprise, mingled with disappointment.

Caroline Herbert was about twenty-seven years of age. Her figure was commanding, though somewhat destitute of flexibility and grace ; an oval face, Grecian nose, dark blue eyes, and well formed mouth, though rather too firmly closing, with fair complexion, and brown hair arranged with the most scrupulous care, composed a style of beauty of almost faultless regularity, but destitute of animation and variety, and all those quick and evanescent expressions of feeling, which passed rapidly over Ellen's lovely face, like lights and shadows flitting over a field. No one could be less sensitive than Caroline Herbert, yet she was by no means deficient in feeling ; she was firm and inflexible in principle, though her views and opinions in regard to moral and religious subjects, were always drawn from general and abstract rules, without sufficient regard to the circumstances and intentions of the agent ; to which sort of virtue the scriptural text " that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," may be well applied. She was a strict member of the Church of Scotland, whose forms and customs were so associated in her mind with religion, that she could scarcely separate them in idea, though she had too much good sense not to admit that there were truly pious members belonging to other churches, and that it was even possible too, that here and there they might be found even among the Papists.

Her affections were constant and sincere, though not easily or often excited ; and though she was guarded and cautious in every demonstration of feeling, still, when the hour of trial came, her friends might rely on her kindness and exertions with the utmost certainty. She lived under the law of duty, and to this she yielded the most implicit obedience, as far as the frailty of human nature would permit ; and she had few, very few, of what are called weaknesses of character to contend with ; so that she

had always been spoken of among her friends and acquaintances as a model of virtue ; which may excuse, in some measure, the rather high estimation in which she held her own character and attainments, unmingled, however, with any emotion of vanity or exultation.

George Herbert had been accustomed to say and think for years, that Caroline was the most faultless of women ; and though the warm and winning affection of Ellen's manner, breathing love and diffusing happiness to all around, sometimes awakened a painful sense of contrast, he always repelled it by repeating the opinion he had maintained and repeated for so many years—"Caroline is the most faultless of women."

No human heart could have resisted Ellen when she strove to win it ; and Richard often smiled at the ingenuity and variety of the efforts she made to gain Caroline's affection ; nor were they vain, though her progress was not so sensible as to satisfy herself. Yet Caroline felt grateful for her kindness, and was surprised to find that she had already formed so strong an affection for one she had known so short a time, in direct violation of one of the rules of conduct she had laid down for herself, namely, "never to be hasty in forming a friendship." But Ellen had struck the rock with a charmed rod, and living waters had flowed from it ; when they were alone together, Caroline, now, would often relax her habitual coldness and reserve, and express her feelings and opinions with openness.

There was a small house on the tract of land which George Herbert was to occupy, in which the former proprietor had resided, which, though it possessed no recommendations of elegance or convenience, might accommodate a small family in tolerable comfort. George Herbert thought it advisable to take immediate possession of this establishment, as there was so much work before them ; and Caroline, though somewhat appalled and discouraged at the various difficulties of superintending a Virginian establishment, was anxious to begin the work of systematizing and arranging ; and had actually written rules for the management of her household. How they were kept, those who are acquainted with the various, irregular, almost incompatible duties and

offices which devolve on the mistress of a Virginia establishment—who must now perform the duty of a clergyman in instructing, reproving, exhorting; now that of a physician, in administering medicines, and often, in default of medical assistance, prescribing them, to the imminent risk of the patient; and, finally, in the absolute control of her subjects, must unite the legislative, judicial, and executive powers—can well conjecture.

Their abode was within the distance of an easy walk from Woodbourne, for such was the name of Richard Clifford's residence, and never a day passed without the inmates of these houses seeing each other, though Ellen now experienced sensations of lassitude which made even this short walk fatiguing. She had taken cold from the heaviness and chillness of the dew, on the night Richard and herself were so long conversing together in the garden, and though her indisposition was attended with no apparently serious consequences, yet a slight cough remained with her, though she did not find it so troublesome as to think it required any particular attention. It was a delightful novelty to the younger part of the family to visit their dear uncle George, of whom they all became very fond; and aunt Caroline, too, Ellen and Sophia declared they loved almost as well, though William would not admit she was at all to be compared to his uncle, or that he loved her even half so well. "And, indeed, girls," he would often add, laughing, "to tell you the truth, I don't half believe you, when you say so."

The happy inmates of Woodbourne, though having a world within themselves, in which their happiness was centred, held also cordial and friendly intercourse with several of the neighboring families—a term which was applied to those who lived within ten or fifteen miles' distance of each other. But to none of these families were they bound by the ties of intimate friendship, except the Granvilles, with whom they had maintained an uninterrupted intercourse since their first settlement in Virginia. Circumstances had favored their intimacy. Mr. Granville had succeeded, by the death of his wife's father, to the possession of an estate within six or seven miles from Woodbourne, not many years after Richard's arrival in Virginia, and removed thither from James-

town to reside. His children had faded and perished like untimely blossoms, and one daughter, Olivia, was now the only child that survived of a numerous family.

Mrs. Granville would have sunk under these accumulated misfortunes, had she not been sustained by Ellen's sympathy, her friendship, and the consolations of religion, which she poured like balm on a wounded spirit. There are many who are willing to undertake the task of consolation, but few, very few, who are capable of executing it successfully. Those who would "minister to a mind diseased" must not only have drunk deeply themselves of the cup of suffering, but they must possess that nicety of observation and delicacy of feeling, which almost intuitively points out what would be most soothing in the peculiar circumstances of the sufferer.

Olivia Granville was a very pretty child, a soft and bright brunette, with large, brilliant, and expressive black eyes, full of vivacity and generous feeling, though her temper was somewhat hasty; and the excessive indulgence with which she was treated had made her self-willed and impatient of contradiction. Her heart was affectionate, and she was attached to the young Cliffords with the love of a sister; though childish quarrels would sometimes arise between Sophia and herself, the next minute they were forgotten. Ellen and William treated her with uniform forbearance; poor Olivia, they said, had neither brother nor sister, and it was wrong to dispute with her. Mrs. Clifford, in vain, pointed out to her friend, Mrs. Granville, the pernicious effects of her excessive indulgence to Olivia. She always promised amendment, and laid general plans of improvement, which were violated in almost every particular instance, when they thwarted Olivia's inclinations.

CHAPTER V.

I hear a voice you can not hear,
Which says I must not stay ;
I see a hand you can not see,
Which beckons me away.

It was toward the close of November, and as Ellen looked on the departing glories of autumn fading into the last sad and sober tints of decay, and listened to the wind sighing with its mysterious murmurs, like the voice of a spirit through the nearly leafless trees, a feeling of unusual sad and tender solemnity fell upon her heart. A voice seemed to admonish her that the earthly happiness which had so long been hers must pass away, those strong and tender ties which bound her so closely to earth, must be broken, and that her spirit must soon be summoned to its eternal home. It was not that she feared death, for even now in the brightest days of her happiness, surrounded by those who were dearer to her than life, she felt those joys, pure and deep as they were, to be only shadows and types of the purer, brighter, and everlasting joys of that land of light and love to which she humbly hoped she was journeying. But as her eye rested first on Richard, then on her children, or her brother, a flood of sad and overpowering tenderness would sometimes come over her ; unbidden tears would fill her eyes, and her heart would lift itself to heaven in silent prayer for strength to resign those to whom her affections clung with vain and unutterable fondness, and to commit them with firm faith and unwavering hope to Him who alone could guide them safely through the voyage of life.

To feel as if we could exert a guardianship over those we love, as if we could watch over and control their destiny, is one of the last earthly delusions from which our hearts can unbind themselves ; and it is this which often gives to separation and death

their bitterest pangs. Ellen had so long been accustomed to act as a second providence in her family, that she found it almost impossible to realize the idea that they could do without her. But she felt the approaches of her malady, though gradual, to be every day closer, and that it was drying up slowly, though surely, the very fountains of life itself; besides, however we may argue about presentiments, and however fallacious they may often be, there is abundant testimony to prove that they sometimes fasten themselves upon the strongest and clearest minds, with a strength and tenacity that appear unconquerable, remaining until foreboding becomes certainty, and working such wonderful effects on the individual who is the subject of them, as almost to compel the belief that it is the voice of God whispering its admonitions to the heart.

Ellen had never really closed her eyes against the truth, but had always sought to prepare her mind to meet it. As the conviction that her days were numbered deepened in her mind, she became more and more anxious in her last efforts for the welfare of her family, and more earnest and deep was her consideration as to the best means of fortifying them against her loss, and averting as much as possible the melancholy consequences with which it must be attended.

But how was the work of preparation to be begun? She saw that Richard was totally unsuspecting of the stroke which awaited him, though his solicitude was excited by her increasing thinness and lassitude, and he had insisted on her taking the best medical advice: yet her cheek glowed with so bright a bloom, and her eye beamed with such unusual brilliancy, and the symptoms of disease sometimes almost disappeared; and though all have seen the approaches of this insidious foe, and wondered at the false hopes with which its victims cheat themselves, yet when we ourselves, or those whom we love as ourselves, become its prey, we yield to the same delusions at which we wonder in others. Ellen had sometimes thought of intimating to Richard what she thought of the danger of her situation, but the words would die on her lip. The task was deferred from day to day; and then she would sometimes doubt, whether it were not better to let

him hope on to the last ; he could not be prepared for such a blow, nor had she strength to bear the sight of his grief ; her soul was striving to detach itself from earth, and to finish its great internal work of preparation before it threw off its tabernacle of clay.

Next to Richard, her daughter Ellen occupied the greatest portion of her thoughts and anxieties. Ellen was now little upward of thirteen, but she had already evinced a power of reflection, a depth of feeling, far beyond her years, which, while it endeared her to her mother, made her tremble for her future happiness. Mrs. Clifford's children were all tenderly attached to her, but Ellen's very soul seemed bound up in hers. Ellen was possessed of gentle playfulness and vivacity of disposition ; but the reflective turn of her mind and the strength of her affections were the most obvious and predominating traits in her character. She would prefer sitting for hours by her mother's side, pouring out from the abundance of her young heart, which sometimes astonished, then delighted, then pained her mother, as evincing what deep capacities of grief existed in the now happy heart of her child. Ellen would prefer sitting thus, or questioning her mother of former times, or often silently holding her mother's hand, if she saw she was not disposed for conversation, to any sport or amusement which could be offered to her. And now that she perceived in her mother symptoms of declining health, though she had not the most distant idea of the serious and fatal nature of her malady, she watched her with the most apprehensive tenderness, and demonstrated by a thousand little acts of attention and offices of love, the depth and untiring nature of her affection to her mother ; who might well have said, with Solomon,

" Abra was ready ere he named her name,
And though he called another Abra came."

The anxious and absorbing affection of her daughter was now a source of frequent pain to Mrs. Clifford, and she sought more earnestly to implant in her young heart the seeds of religion, whose holy influences may be felt purely and strongly, long before the mind is capable of fully understanding its principles, or

reasoning upon its doctrines. She tried too, to induce Ellen to join in the active sports and amusements of the other children, yet nothing but a command could prevail on her to leave her; and when she thought she had been long enough absent to please her mother, she would glide back with noiseless steps, and seat herself at her side again.

Ellen Clifford struggled with all her power against the debilitating effects of her malady, for she could not bear the expression of distress and anxiety which now clouded Richard's brow, whenever any symptom of increased indisposition appeared; nor the plaintive tones in which her daughter Ellen expressed her hope that she would feel better again to-morrow. She resolutely suppressed every complaint, and determined to make her family happy, as long as she was able. And when she was no longer able, who should supply her place? Alas! her heart told her there was none that could; but that in humble and unquestioning faith she must resign her husband and children into the hands of God.

She began now to study, with increased interest and anxiety, the character of her sister-in-law; and though it was not very congenial to her taste and feelings, still she saw in it much to like and approve, and she strove as much as possible to recommend her daughters especially to Mrs. Herbert's affection, and to teach them to look upon their aunt Caroline as their friend. And in this effort she was not unsuccessful, for in the kindly soil of their young hearts there wanted but few genial influences to make love spring up; and Mrs. Herbert, who comprehended entirely the fatal nature of Ellen's disease, showed an increasing interest and affection for the children, which was most gratifying to the heart of their mother. Even William admitted he liked aunt Caroline much better than he did at first, because she seemed to be getting so fond of Ellen and Sophia, and was so kind to his mother; though he often added, she had such a cold, steady way of looking at him, and had so many rules about every thing, that he never could feel at his ease with her.

The winter was over, and with the approach of spring, Ellen's decaying energies seemed temporarily to revive, and she

grieved to see Richard's hopes revive with them, and with what rapture he hailed every favorable omen as a certain sign that the disease was leaving her ; indeed, he had never permitted any definite name to be given it, and would not permit the least intimation of its being of a consumptive nature. Ellen was not deceived ; she looked around on the budding leaves, the opening flowers, the garden which she had so much loved, the wild woods endeared by a thousand recollections of pleasant walks, of words of love and joy here spoken, and a warning voice seemed to whisper in her ear "The place that has known thee, shall know thee no more for ever," and she would brush away the gathering tear that dimmed her eye, and chide the weakness of the spirit, which clung with fond and unavailing regrets to earth, forgetful of its heavenly home, and unmindful of His love, who bestowed these earthly gifts, in whose sweetness we forget the Giver, as faint types of the unspeakable joys that await the faithful : often, indeed, at other times, would faith and hope triumph over the weakness of her mortal nature, and enable her soul to soar on the wings of confiding and adoring love.

It was a bright and balmy April evening, and Ellen had appeared to revive beneath its influence, like the drooping lily beneath the genial rays of the sun ; she had walked several times around her flower-garden, wrapped in a thick shawl, and leaning on Richard's arm : and had given various directions to the gardener, respecting the management of her flowers. Richard listened with delight, and, as one hope with him was always the parent of another, he began to hope Ellen would soon be strong enough to take a short ride on horseback with him ; the doctor, he said, had strongly recommended she should ride as soon as she was able, and he had heard that Mr. Thompson had a gentle and beautiful pony for sale, which he thought, would suit her exactly. He said, he would go that very evening and purchase it, as it seemed very probable she would feel well enough to ride a short distance with him next morning. Ellen only smiled in reply, she had not the heart to say any thing discouraging, and Richard went off with newly revived hopes to make the purchase. She was looking out at the window, believing herself to be alone,

when she heard a light footstep, and Ellen had resumed her old station at her side.

"Where are William and Sophia, my dear? why are you not with them, this fine evening? It is almost a sin to be shut up in the house, when the air blows so sweetly, and the sun shines so brightly."

"Oh, Sophia is looking for wild-flowers and birds' nests, and William has gone to walk with Mr. Walton."

"And Ellen is in the house, moping by her mother's side?"

"Yes," said Ellen, gently taking her mother's fair and wasted hand within her own, and covering it with kisses, "yes, mamma, Ellen is in the best place in the world to her!"

"And, therefore she will remain in it, notwithstanding her mother's wish to the contrary?" said Mrs. Clifford, in a reproachful, yet tender tone.

"Oh, no," said Ellen, while her lip quivered, and the tear rose to her eye, "oh, no, mamma, I will walk any where, or do any thing in the world to please you; but," she added in a pleading tone, "if you would only let me stay with you this one evening, I should be so glad!"

"Well, Ellen, stay then this one evening; but in reward for my compliance, you must listen to me attentively; and try, too, to profit by my advice."

"Oh, thank you, mamma, I will certainly listen, and try to do every thing you advise!"

"You little know what you ~~promise~~, my child, you have a great work before you; but I ~~trust that~~ God will assist your weakness and pardon mine, which ~~has~~ encouraged faults in you that might, perhaps, by proper means, have been removed."

"Indeed mamma, I don't know how you can be to blame for my faults—I am sure you have always given me the very best advice!"

"Yes, Ellen, I have done wrong in letting you love me too well!"

Ellen looked up in her mother's face with unfeigned surprise, and replied, in a tone of emotion, "In the first place, mamma, I could not love you too well; and, in the next place, even if I did, how could you have prevented it?"

“ Ellen, you are a child in years ; but in feeling and reflection you are a woman, and as such I address you. There is a blind, absorbing sort of affection, which lavished upon any earthly object, is idolatry. It ends, either in destroying the character, by depriving it of that power of self-command, which is so necessary to virtue ; and narrowing the heart, which should expand itself in generous sympathy to the wants and woes of the human race, to exclusive devotion to some frail and imperfect creature ; or the heart must be wrung with blood and tears from this vain idolatry, by depriving it of its idols. You can not now understand how these consequences follow from excessive affection, but you will remember my words, and find that they are true. I ought in time to have endeavored to guard against this, and instead of encouraging you to pour forth all the feelings of your heart to me, I should have taught you how dangerous it is to let our happiness depend on the sympathy of others. In your character, I discern much that is similar in natural disposition to my own at your age. But Providence denied me, in kindness, as I afterward perceived, those indulgences that have been granted to you. From the time of my earliest recollection, my mother was in ill health, her nerves were extremely delicate, and the least agitation overcame her ; my father was continually harassed and uneasy ; my brother, too young and too wild to listen to my little griefs, or sympathize in my feelings. So, when any little mischance occurred, or unpleasant feeling arose, I was driven back on my own resources, to recover my cheerfulness and good-humor, as I best could. Though I thirsted for sympathy I made no effort to obtain it, and was compelled by the discipline of circumstances, particularly, after the death of my mother, to acquire a power of endurance, or strength of character, which, otherwise, I should probably never have possessed.”

There was something in the conclusion of this speech, that sounded ominous in Ellen's ears ; her eyes filled with tears as she said, “ Oh, mamma, I trust God will be too merciful ever to try me so severely. I don't know how to break myself of loving you so well ; but any sort of discipline which you think will improve my character I will submit to gladly, and follow

your advice in every thing ; and as you say you were something like me once in natural disposition, perhaps, one day or other, if I try very hard, I may learn to be something like you are now."

"Something much better, I trust, my dear," said Ellen Clifford, as she kissed away the tears from her daughter's cheek. "But to be either good or happy you must learn, my child, to submit your will to the will of God ; you must learn, too, to consider the happiness of all around you—not only the happiness of those to whom you are most tenderly attached ; nor must you always expect to meet with sympathy even from those you love, or feel hurt and grieved if you do not."

"I will remember what you say, mamma ; I will try to act and feel as you wish me ; but indeed these are hard things to attain."

"Hard, indeed, and even impossible, Ellen, without seeking the grace of God, which is denied to none who seek it."

Ellen was silent, she saw that her mother wished to prepare her for something, she knew not what ; but feared to make further inquiries, but cast a sad and wistful look up to her mother's face, without uttering a word.

Mrs. Clifford's strength was much exhausted, and she forbore to say more for the present. Just then, Sophia entered, her face lighted with smiles, and her apron filled with wild pinks, violets of every hue, from the palest blue to the richest purple, and wood anemones, which she poured with an air of exultation in her mother's lap, saying : "Here, mamma, they are all for you, and William sent you this little bunch of cowslips, he says he knows you will like them best because they are English flowers ; but I don't think they are half so pretty as our own pretty, bright Virginian flowers."

"I have, at least, one bright little Virginian flower that I love better even than my English cowslips," said Ellen, kissing the rosy lips of the happy child.

CHAPTER VI.

Clasp me a little longer on the brink
Of fate ! while I can feel thy dear caress ;
And when this heart hath ceased to beat—oh, think,
And let it moderate thy woe's excess,
That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
And friend to more than human friendship just.
Oh, by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs—when I am laid in dust.

CAMPBELL.

“Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,” and Richard experienced now, for the first time, that sickening and sinking of the heart which deprives life of its interest, and paralyzes the energies of the mind, as he perceived that Ellen grew visibly worse, notwithstanding the unusually mild and fine weather of May. He wearied Dr. Fleming with inquiries, as to whether a journey would be serviceable; he watched with feverish anxiety the effect of every prescription, which the physician gave rather in pity to the feelings of the friends of his patient, than from any hope of benefiting her; then he would inveigh against all physicians as mere ignorant pretenders to science; then, as a drowning man catches at straws, he would consult every old woman in the neighborhood, who pretended to any knowledge of disease, and listen to the history of wonderful cures performed by teas and simples, or some nostrum peculiar to her own family.

Ellen, in compassion to Richard Clifford, would often consent to try these remedies, though her good sense and unclouded reason told her it was vain and childish; she felt, however, that the struggle could not long continue, and she sought by prayer and self-communion to gather strength to prepare her husband for the impending stroke, which might fall she knew not how soon; for she now often felt a mortal lassitude creeping over her, making all

things seem dim, dreary, and distant, as if her spirit were already passing into a separate state of existence, while it still saw and heard the objects of its earthly love, without being able to approach them. Caroline Herbert saw with much concern and disapprobation, the state of Richard's mind, and determined, since no one else would undertake the task, that it was her duty to address some conversation to him on the subject of resignation, and throw out some observations, which might in some degree prepare him for the impending and inevitable misfortune. She had not, however, proceeded far in this conversation, when Richard, starting to his feet in much agitation and some displeasure, assured her she was quite mistaken in Ellen's situation; that it was only this morning she had assured him she felt better than she had done for many days; that her cough had evidently been less for a day or two; and that Mrs. Granville had told him, only the day before, that she had had a cousin in much worse health than Ellen, who was now completely restored. Saying this, he abruptly left the room, determined to give Mrs. Herbert no opportunity for reply.

She looked at him in silent surprise, then turning to her husband, calmly remarked that she had never seen a man so unsubdued in affliction as Mr. Clifford, and continued to hem a muslin frill with most persevering industry. George Herbert made no reply, but turned to the window; and Caroline, who talked rather from a sense of duty than inclination, was silent also.

Richard Clifford went immediately to Mrs. Clifford's apartment, of which he was now almost as constant an inmate as his daughter Ellen. He found her seated in an easy chair, which was placed before a window that opened upon an extensive and beautiful prospect of the surrounding country. The lengthening shadows of evening fell softly on the emerald green of the fields, the varied tints of the forests, from the palest to the deepest green, and the bright roseate hues of the blooming orchards around mingled beautifully together; while the deep blue tint which marks a water-course, and the silver waters of the James River, gave to the landscape a variety of shade and coloring, which mingled in softness, richness, and beauty, scarcely to be surpassed by the

fairest scenes on earth. Ellen looked alternately at the beautiful scenery without, then at her lovely daughters, who were seated at her feet, and for whom she was twining fanciful wreaths of the wild-flowers, with which they had filled her lap. The palest violets, buds of sweet-brier, and the light, ethereal flowers of the wood anemone, varying from the purest white to faint and transparent rose-tints, formed a wreath well suited to the delicate and spiritual beauty of Ellen's face; while the glowing heart's-ease, the gay pink, and bright buds of ivy adorned Sophia's sunny brow and laughing face. Their mother smiled on them as she finished her task, but a sudden thoughtfulness again overshadowed her face, as she inquired where William was.

She repeated the question twice before she received a reply, when Ellen said :

"Perhaps I ought not to tell William's secrets; but he is very busy in his own room, copying the scene in Devonshire you admired so much, in Mr. Lorimer's book of engravings, which he has lent him. Mr. Lorimer expects to leave the neighborhood, in a few days, and William wishes to finish his copy, and says he hopes it will be nice enough to be framed, and hang in your room, mamma. And, indeed, you can't think how much William has improved since the last drawing lessons you gave him; he has been trying every evening to improve himself by copying sketches."

"Yes, mamma," said Sophia, eagerly; "and he says he shall never give you any trouble again in teaching him."

The tears filled Ellen's eyes at this artless speech, and Richard turned to the window to conceal his emotion.

"Poor fellow!" she said; "and has he been shutting himself in a close room these beautiful evenings, after having been engaged all the morning, too, at his studies? Go, tell him, Sophia, I have found his ~~secret~~ out; that he is a dear, good boy, and I thank him for the ~~pains~~ he has taken to please me; but that he must come to me ~~now~~, and bring his drawing with him, just as it is."

Sophia skipped out of the room, and was back again in a minute, holding William by the hand; his fine face glowed with

pleasure, as he held the nearly finished drawing in his hand, and his mother praised the execution, and thanked him tenderly for this proof of his affection. He only said, "I thought you would like it, mamma;" but his countenance, and the tone of his voice, evinced how deeply his heart was penetrated with the tenderness of his mother's manner, and the pride he felt in her praises.

"You are all dear, good children," she said, as she looked from one to another of the beautiful group; "but you must not stay shut up in the house this sweet evening. Go, walk together; and do not forget poor Mr. Walton—you had better ask him to go with you."

"We will go and gather some strawberries for your supper, mamma. I know a field that is red with them," said Sophia.

"Thank you, my dear," said Ellen; "and don't you think your father and aunt Caroline like strawberries, too?"

"Oh, yes," said Sophia; "we'll carry a basket and get enough for all, and make haste back; but you may be sure of that, since Ellen is going with us; for you know, mamma, she is never satisfied, unless she is pinned to your side."

"Come, my children," said Ellen, "and let me give you each a kiss before you go."

"Must William come, too, mamma?" said Sophia, smiling.

"Yes, all of you," said Ellen, looking toward William, with a smile so sweet, and yet so mournful, that it imprinted itself indelibly on his recollection; then embracing them all, she imprinted on the forehead of each a long and lingering kiss, and whispered softly in the ear of each, "God bless you, my child!"

Struck to the heart with emotions of grief, awe, and tenderness, which they knew neither how to express or understand, Ellen and William slowly quitted the room, and even Sophia followed in thoughtfulness and silence. Ellen watched them from the window, until the windings of the path hid them from her sight, then turning away and closing her eyes, seemed lost in silent meditation for some minutes. Richard Clifford could not trust his voice to speak; he gazed on her with sad and unutterable fondness, and thought that in the brightest days of her youth and beauty, he had never seen her look so lovely. Her skin was of

transparent whiteness, all pale and pure, save one bright pink spot that glowed like an opening rose on her cheek ; her raven hair was braided on her noble and spotless brow ; the long, dark eyelashes closed, as if to shut out all earthly objects ; the "rapture of repose" shed over her countenance, imparted an almost seraphic cast to her beauty.

At length, breathing a gentle sigh, she unclosed her eyes and motioned to Richard to take a seat beside her, then pressing his hand gently between her own, she looked earnestly in his face for a minute in silence, then said in a low, though firm tone :

"Do you remember, Richard, that to-morrow is the anniversary of our marriage ?"

"Remember it ? Oh, yes ; how could I forget it, Ellen ?"

"Sixteen years of happiness so pure and bright—how swiftly have they flown ! And yet, I would not recall them ; for how hard has it been to break the fetters with which they chained me to earth, making all here too sweet and too dear, until the immortal spirit, forgetting its heavenly home, would have lingered here forever. But this weakness, I trust, has passed. Oh, would that it were past with you also, dearest, best of friends ! But this, I know, can not yet be ; but let me ask that you will grieve not as one without hope. Think of all the past, which now seems like one bright dream of light, love, and happiness ; and remember that our love has been almost more than earthly ; for it has been unembittered by the recollection of one harsh word, one unkind action. Think, too—"

"Oh, Ellen !" exclaimed Richard Clifford, in an accent of despair ; "do not, do not, in mercy, talk to me thus. There yet is hope. God is merciful, and nothing is impossible with Him."

Ellen cast on him a glance of compassionate love, then resumed, in a steady tone : "Yes, God is merciful, even in the bereavements with which he chastens us ; merciful, far beyond what our weak faith and narrow understandings can conceive. And with Him, too, nothing is impossible. He can bind up the broken heart, and pour balm on wounds of the spirit too deep for aught earthly to heal. Has not our lot been happy, far, far beyond the lot of ordinary mortals ? And shall you grieve at being

deprived of a few fleeting years of earthly happiness, that we may be purified and prepared for a re-union in that land where there is no more parting?"

Ellen paused from exhaustion, and Richard made no reply, but covered his face with his hands, and his whole frame trembled with agony.

"Oh, Richard," she continued, in a low and faltering tone, "think of these things.—But, for your grief, the bitterness of death for me is past, and all is peace, deep, unutterable peace. I feel a heavenly love within me stronger even than my love for you, which is stronger far than life itself. I feel a strong hand guiding me gently through the valley and shadow of death, to those joys which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. Strive, dear Richard, to meet me in that happy land to which I am going."

A deep and convulsive sob, which could no longer be restrained, was Richard's only reply. His manliness forsook him, and he sunk into weakness beneath the stroke, which now, for the first time, he believed inevitably impending, for every word which Ellen uttered carried conviction with it, and fell like ice upon his heart.

Ellen bent forward, and putting her arms around his neck, gently kissed his forehead, then said, in tones almost inarticulate from emotion and exhaustion, "Go, now, my love, this is too much for me. I feel exhausted, and perhaps I could sleep a little. Send Caroline; she is a good, kind nurse, and will watch me gently. I will send for you again when I awake."

Richard obeyed her, for he feared the violence of emotions, which he could not restrain, might injure Ellen in her weak state. He delivered her message to Mrs. Herbert, and then rushed out of the house, after desiring he should be sent for, if the slightest change took place in Ellen, without, however, remembering to direct where he should be found; indeed, he went forth scarcely knowing or caring whither. When Caroline entered the room she found Ellen leaning back in the chair, supported by a faithful negro-servant, Betty. A tear, the last tribute to mortal weakness and earthly love, was trickling, unheeded,

down her cheek, while Betty brushed away, every now and then, with the back of her hand, the large drops that fell from her own eyes.

Caroline was not unmoved, but with that kind and resolute composure, which is so invaluable a quality in a nurse, she fixed the pillows, administered a few cordial drops to Ellen, and persuaded her to lie down, as she had proposed.

"Once more, then," said Ellen, "once more support me, and let me look from this window once more." Caroline and Betty supported her as she looked earnestly on every object, as if bidding it farewell, then said almost in a whisper, "It is all past now—help me to lie down."

She lay with her eyes closed for a few minutes, then looked up at Caroline, and said, "Where is he?"

"He has gone out of the house," said Caroline.

"And my children?"

"They have not yet returned from their walk."

"It is well, very well—and George?"

"Shut up in his own room."

"Poor fellow! I thought to have seen him, too, this evening, but I am too weak now. Tell him all you know I feel; tell him he must meet me in heaven."

"Oh, yes, dear sister," said Caroline, with unusual emotion "I will tell him every thing you wish; but compose yourself now, and try to sleep."

"I will," said Ellen. "I have no more now to do with earth. Do not let me see any of them, but open my Bible, and read to me the chapter beginning, 'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,' and perhaps I may fall asleep."

Betty handed the Bible, and took her seat at her mistress's feet, while Caroline commenced the chapter, in a clear and distinct tone. Ellen's lips moved, as if in prayer, then uttered a deep sigh; a slight convulsive motion agitated her frame, and her "spirit returned to God who gave it."

CHAPTER VII.

It's no in titles nor in rank,
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest ;
It's no in making muckle gear,
It's no in books, it's no in lear,
To make us truly blest.
If happiness has not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest.

BURNS.

"VANITY of vanities, saith the Preacher, all is vanity," and yet, though this has been the experience of all since his time, who have sought to find happiness in the goods, the pleasures, or the honors of this world, mankind is not a jot the wiser from the accumulated disappointments of ages, but each is cheated in his turn with the same delusive hopes, and continues to pursue them long after he has proved them to be vanity.

Few men had enjoyed a larger portion of the goods of this world, few had drunk deeper of the cup of pleasure, or had been crowned with more flattering honors, and yet few men were more unhappy than was Lord Francis Fitz-Claire. He had built houses, he had planted gardens, he had made the treasures of ancient and modern literature his own, he had sought and obtained political honors ; but all had been alike vain and unsatisfactory ; they had not quenched the burning thirst of his heart for happiness, which it knew not how to seek, and was incapable of enjoying ; for there must be a preparation of the heart to enable us to enjoy this most blessed gift of Heaven. He had seen Ellen Clifford depart from him forever—depart, too, as the bride of a brother whom she had preferred to himself—with a mixture of rage, wounded pride, and disappointed love, which exceeded

in bitterness any sensation he had ever before or since experienced. There was a fearful struggle in his heart, but pride, at length, predominated over every other sensation, and cursing his own weakness, he resolved to obliterate every trace of Ellen's image from his mind; and for this purpose he resorted to scenes of pleasure and dissipation, to which his fastidious and exclusive tastes, and his literary pursuits had hitherto made him a stranger. Any thing was better than to remember Ellen, or to be forced to think of himself.

During this career of dissipation, he became acquainted with Donna Inez de Altavara, daughter of the Spanish ambassador. She was his only child, and would inherit large possessions; besides, the rich, Oriental style of her beauty was new and captivating; and, moreover, she was so very much in love with him, that it seemed impossible for her to conceal her feelings. A thousand apparently artless manifestations of her passion were constantly betraying it, not only to all around, but to Lord Fitz-Clare himself. Francis was not in love with her, and in any other mood would only have amused himself with her weakness, but at this time, such artless devotion was peculiarly soothing to his wounded pride. She was very beautiful, too, would be very rich, and noble Castilian blood flowed in her veins. Then, he must marry at some time or other, or the title would devolve on his brother, and Ellen might wear the coronet, which she had rejected with so much disdain, when he would have laid all his honors at her feet. This thought was gall and wormwood to his heart, and these various considerations combined, but more especially the last, determined him to bestow his hand on Donna Inez de Altavara; a thought of the possibility of rejection never crossed his brain for a moment. His proposals were received by the lady and her father with evident delight, and in six months after Richard Clifford's departure from England, Lord Fitz-Clare led Donna Inez to the altar. But, though the bride was exceedingly beautiful, and attired in a style of Eastern magnificence, yet, even as she stood by the side of Lord Fitz-Clare to pronounce those vows which were to unite them forever, his thoughts wandered far away. Ellen Herbert's form, as he had first seen her, arrayed in spotless and simple white,

with a rose gracefully twined in her raven hair, and her soul beaming through her long lashes, which shaded her soft yet brilliant eyes, rose to his recollection with all the vividness of reality; and his abstraction was so visible, that one of the bride's-maids whispered to another, "What is Lord Fitz-Clare looking at? certainly nothing in this assembly. There really is something so strange in his appearance, that were I Donna Inez I should be half afraid of him."

Lord Fitz-Clare soon discovered that Inez was not possessed of that artlessness of character which, he had thought, constituted her chief charm. It is true, her feelings were ungoverned, because she had never cared to control them, and being the only child of an indulgent parent, found that the more the vehemence with which she expressed her inclinations, the more certain they were to be gratified. Lord Fitz-Clare's personal attractions and graces of manner, which were of no common order, had excited her admiration, and captivated her vivid and unregulated imagination; moreover, his indifference piqued and stimulated her vanity. Finding he was flattered at the many tokens of preference she lavished on him, she made no effort to conceal the impression he had made on her fancy, rather than on her heart, and most deliberately manifested it in a thousand of the prettiest and most artless ways. And Lord Fitz-Clare was well skilled in the knowledge of human nature, a deep and close observer of the actions of men; but he had thought Donna Inez was so artless and simple, and possessed so little command over her own feelings, that her character was not worth studying.

He soon found, however, that her fondness became more exacting. The least omission or neglect aroused her jealousy, and produced a torrent of reproaches; and her fondness for dress and show could not be satisfied by the most lavish expenditure. Lord Fitz-Clare possessed elegant tastes; and though his whole establishment evinced the liberality and taste of its possessor, yet he had too much good sense, too lofty an ambition, and too refined a taste to take delight and pride in mere show and glitter. He despised this weakness of character in Inez, and still more the artifices by which she sought to gratify her propensities for ex-

travagance, without his knowledge. For Inez had already learned to fear Lord Fitz-Clare, though she had not ceased to love him, after her manner of loving. "There is but one true love, but there are many counterfeits," and these counterfeits are often so cunning as to be received in preference to the true coin.

Lord Fitz-Clare abhorred the clamor of altercation or the weakness of upbraiding; he had too much taste and too much dignity to quarrel; nothing, he thought, was more decidedly vulgar and disagreeable; he therefore repelled all the attacks of Inez with a silent and calm contempt, which, together with the quietest but most marked disregard of her feelings and wishes, at length produced the desired effect of awing and chilling her into silence and respect. For, though passionate, she was timid; and she now had recourse to artifice for the gratification of wishes, which she had once fondly hoped it would be Lord Fitz-Clare's pride and pleasure to indulge. It had never cost her any thing but reproaches, caresses, and very rarely had she found occasion to have recourse to tears, to obtain from her doating father any indulgence he could procure. But she learned now, with bitter and passionate disappointment, that these weapons availed nothing with Lord Fitz-Clare. The tears now often came unbidden and unwished-for, and she would hasten to wipe away these vain and humiliating signs of mortification and disappointment. Lord Fitz-Clare was well pleased that he had restored, by his decision, quiet to his household—in his opinion one of the first and most indispensable of earthly blessings. He had almost cured Inez, too, of making scenes, as he called it—a practice which at once wearied and disgusted him; and he pursued his own course, as regardless of her humors and wishes as if no such being had existed. On the other hand, he never interfered in her pleasures, when they did not come in collision with his own, or were not unsuited to the dignity of Lady Fitz-Clare. He indulged her even beyond what was reasonable in her capricious tastes, and always treated her in public with that attention and consideration which, he thought, his own character as a chivalrous gentleman and accomplished nobleman required.

Domestic happiness, he thought, was quite out of the question.

Indeed, he had always ridiculed the name, and disbelieved its existence ; except once for a short period, when feelings had been awakened, which had slumbered so deeply in his heart, that he had not dreamed of their existence. For the first time, he had felt his immortal nature within him—for the first time, he had believed there might be such a ~~feeling~~ as pure, disinterested love—for the first time, he had begun to suspect that virtue was something more than a name, after he became acquainted with Ellen Herbert. And it was for the vanishing of these bright dreams, as he now considered them, that he grieved, as much as for his disappointed love. At last he felt, when their light had departed, that his soul was wrapped in thicker and more hopeless darkness than ever ; but his was not a nature to yield quietly to grief, or to seek in meekness to draw lessons of wisdom from disappointment. No, he raised his brow more proudly than ever, he silenced the still, small voice of conscience within, and resolutely determined to carve out happiness for himself, if it were to be found in earthly things. Every disappointment seemed only to stimulate him to fresh efforts, yet, every failure but thickened the gloom that hung over his path ; but his pride and his unconquerable will, still triumphed over all, and still he pursued his restless search for that bliss which was never to be his. All was vanity here, all thick darkness beyond, for his mind rejected with contempt, and without examination, the doctrines of Christianity. He stumbled at the very threshold ; for the fundamental truths of revealed religion were revolting to his pride, and above his reason.

Lady Fitz-Clare, on the contrary, gave herself up now, to the most thoughtless pursuits of pleasure, then to the wildest and weakest superstitions of the Romish Church, by way of expiation for the dissipation in which she had indulged. The consequence of these different principles, or rather courses of action, in the education of a family, may be easily foreseen. Lady Fitz-Clare became the mother of a numerous family, most of them possessed of personal graces, natural talents, and all the accomplishments which the best masters could give ; but the education of the heart and soul had been entirely neglected. These children,

soon learned from their father to despise the superstitious weakness of their mother on religious subjects. Besides, children are exceedingly quick in perceiving inconsistencies of conduct ; and they could not fail of perceiving, how little Lady Fitz-Claire's habits of self-indulgence, her love of dress and show, and the fits of passion in which she indulged, when she was not restrained by Lord Fitz-Claire's presence, accorded with the doctrines of the religion she professed. They could not respect their mother, or love their father ; for though he had taken care to have the best teachers provided for them, he had not concerned himself to become acquainted with their characters, or to gain their affections. There was something, too, in his manner which awed and silenced them when they were admitted to his presence ; and they were always glad to escape from the restraint of it, though with this feeling was mixed respect for his talents, and pride in the high station which he occupied. Thus, was Lord Fitz-Claire living, in the possession of all that is most prized in the world, surrounded, too, by promising children, and yet he felt alone in the world—and there were times, when he would gladly have exchanged places with the poorest laborer in England, if he could forget himself ; though again pride resumed her empire, and he raised his brow more loftily, and sailed gallantly on the voyage of life, with a smile of defiance on his lip, and a consuming fire at his heart.

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CHAPTER VIII.

The beautiful is vanished—and returns not.
COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

MORE than six years had elapsed since Ellen Clifford's death, yet no one could look upon Richard Clifford, without perceiving the deep change, which that event had wrought in him. It was true, he no longer experienced that desolating, overpowering grief, which, like the rushing of a torrent, overthrows all the barriers which human fortitude can oppose. For a brief season after Ellen's death, with him the very foundations of faith were shaken; every thing which had once given pleasure was now converted into a source of intolerable pain; for with all he had once loved, her image was inseparably connected, and he felt but one wish strongly—to lie down in the grave and sleep beside her. His duties became an intolerable burden, and he would willingly have renounced all the pursuits of life, and have buried himself in darkness and solitude, but that he felt such weakness to be unworthy and unmanly.

But a mind so strong, a heart so noble, and one so much under the influence of religious feeling, as Richard Clifford's had been, could not long remain in this state of dark and hopeless despair. The frequent visits of Mr. Morton, the minister of the parish, who had been much esteemed and loved by Ellen Clifford, seemed to throw a gleam of light across the hopeless gloom of his heart. Mr. Morton spoke not directly of his loss, nor did he ever mention Ellen's name, for he perceived that Mr. Clifford was not in a state to bear it; but he spoke, as a man of feeling and as a Christian, of the uses of affliction, and of the consolations of religion; and there was something inspiring, in the very tones of his voice, and the expression of his eye, when he enlarged on the triumphs of Christian faith and hope—on the necessity

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that all should strive earnestly to advance the cause of goodness and truth. But when he touched with simple eloquence of feeling, on the happiness that awaited the faithful in that land, where those who have loved on earth meet to part no more, this was like balm to Richard's heart.

Mr. Morton had been tried by time and by affliction, and had come out purified from the furnace ; he spoke from personal experience, and his words went to the heart. He was, indeed, "a living epistle, known and read by all men," of the truths he preached, and his life and example, were more effectual in destroying infidelity in those who witnessed it, than the arguments of a whole host of learned authors could have been. All were compelled to acknowledge the strength of that principle, which could produce such a daily course of action ; and none could doubt, that the fountain must be deep and pure, which sent forth living and refreshing waters.

Slowly did Richard's mind begin to recover its wonted energy, and his heart its wonted kindness and nobleness of feeling, which elevated him above the weakness and ingratitude of repining at the decrees of his Heavenly Father. But his buoyancy, his joyousness of spirit, that light of hope before which all cares were dissipated, and difficulties became only excitements to action, had fled—and fled forever. With him the charm, the illusion of life was over, the path seemed now long and wearisome, nevertheless, he determined to tread it firmly and with courage. He found in ceaseless occupation for the benefit of others, some relief to his own feelings ; and if his thoughts were deeper and sadder, they had nothing in them of severity or repining. It is true, he had always delighted in making others happy, but he had too much banished from his consideration the dark side of human life ; all was sunshine within his own breast, and he always looked on the bright side of things. But now his search was rather after truth than happiness ; yet, though the roads by which we seek these two ~~great~~ objects of human action, commence in exactly opposite directions, after many windings, they ultimately converge and end in one ; though our mortal course should be cut off before we arrive at the place of union, still light enough

dawns on the path of truth after we have pursued it long and steadily, to show us its blissful termination.

Richard Clifford's children were very dear to him, and deservedly so, both from their own qualities, and the dutiful affection they evinced toward him; but in losing Ellen he felt that he had lost a part of his existence. With her were gone the cherished hopes, the bright and dear associations, formed by years of youth and happiness spent together—the eye which could read the workings of his mind, with a glance, and the heart which always vibrated in sympathy with the joys and sorrows of his own. Sweet and hallowed, though mournful, were his recollections of her who “dwelt within his bosom's core,” and he felt a sad pleasure, if we may be allowed the expression, in fulfilling what he knew would have been her wishes in every thing.

Ellen had grieved after her mother's death so long and so deeply, that it seriously affected for some time her naturally delicate constitution, she lost her appetite, her color, her spirits, and seemed gradually pining and wasting away. She would steal away from the rest of the family, and sit for hours in the room that had been her mother's, on the very seat she had once so constantly occupied beside her. In vain Mrs. Herbert lectured her on the sinfulness and weakness of thus giving way to her feelings; Ellen acknowledged what she said was true, but it did not touch her heart, it did not impart to her the least comfort. There are many persons, who administer comfort to the soul somewhat in the manner condemned in scripture of administering to our bodily necessities, who when they see a brother or sister naked and destitute of daily food will say unto them “Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled,” notwithstanding they give them not such things as are needful for the body; and such spiritual comfort is just about as profitable.

Things went on thus for some time. Ellen grew paler and thinner, and seemed sunk in a state of hopeless dejection. William and Sophia tried in vain to cheer and amuse her; Mr. Walton sought to interest her in her studies; and Mrs. Herbert gave her longer and more severe lectures upon the sinfulness and obstinacy

of her grief; but though Ellen was always mild, gentle, and obliging, still all their efforts availed nothing to change her feelings, until these efforts were nearly relinquished in despair. One evening, she had watched an opportunity of slipping away, when the other members of the family were engaged in different occupations; she was walking alone in a grove of forest trees just below the garden, which had once been a favorite haunt of her mother's. Here she was endeavoring to recall every look and word which had passed on the last evening they had been there together, when she started at hearing a rustling sound among the leaves, and turning quickly, she perceived Mr. Morton standing beside her.

"How are you, Ellen," said he, extending his hand kindly toward her.

Ellen took his offered hand; there was something in the very tone of his voice that soothed her. "Very well," she said, "I thank you, Mr. Morton."

"I am glad to hear it, my dear; for when health fails us we are unable to do any thing for others, and without this, it is impossible to be useful, and difficult to be happy."

Ellen looked up in his face without reply; but her look said, as plainly as words could have done, how far she was from being happy.

"I am afraid William is injuring himself seriously, by the manner in which he pores over his books from morning until night; even Mr. Walton seems uneasy about him, and says he would mention it to Mr. Clifford, but he can not endure to make him uneasy. Could not you induce him to walk or ride with you? Sophia says, he told her he would do any thing that he thought would be serviceable to you."

Ellen blushed deeply, and confessed that she had never asked him to walk or ride with her.

Sophia, too, I fear, is in a bad way; her spirits are so buoyant that she must have company and amusement, and if she can not procure such company and amusements as are suitable to her, it will probably lead her into very bad habits. I passed her on my way here, with her bonnet off; her hair looking as if it had not

been combed for a week, her frock torn, and her hands stained with blackberries. I said a few words of reproof to her, but she excused herself by saying, that you would not talk to her, and that you seemed to like to walk by yourself; and that William was busy at his books; and she was so dull and lonesome, she was obliged to find some amusement for herself."

Ellen blushed more deeply than before; her eyes filled with tears, but she did not utter a word in justification of herself.

"I ought likewise to mention to you, Ellen, that as I came by old Rachel's cabin this evening, I stopped for a short time, having heard she had expressed a wish to see me. She is very low indeed, and I found had been suffering for such nourishment as is necessary for a person in her state; but she ascribed this entirely to the negligence of the servants, and said she hated to pester poor Miss Ellen."

Here Ellen could no longer restrain her emotion, but said, with tears, "I have been very bad, very unkind, very selfish, Mr. Morton—I despise myself."

"We all are so, my dear, when we yield ourselves up without resistance, even to good feelings; they carry us we know not whither. Even the sensibilities which do most honor to our nature, if weakly yielded to, end in selfish and unkind forgetfulness of duty, and complete prostration of character. How old are you, Ellen?"

"Fourteen years next month."

"Fourteen in years, but eighteen at least in reflection and understanding, Ellen. You are now, my dear child, a responsible being; you have duties to your God, to your fellow-creatures, and to yourself, which can not be neglected without incurring guilt."

"But, Mr. Morton," said Ellen, looking earnestly in his face, and her eyes glistening with tears, "I feel the truth of what you have said, sometimes, though never so forcibly as I have done this evening; but I have no heart to perform my duties, and then they could not be pleasing to God, unless performed willingly; do you think they could, sir?"

"No, Ellen; but would God have said to every living man,

'My son, give me thy heart,' had it been impossible to do so? Moreover, has He not promised to give us his grace, if we ask it humbly, sincerely, to enable us to love him? He has given us, too, the Bible as a rule of action; instead, then, of making yourself miserable when you find that your feelings are not what they ought to be, and thinking of your feelings until your mind is so much perplexed you scarcely know what they are, try to perform the duties that God enjoins, praying for His assistance, and fear not that you will not learn to love to do the will of God, and find a delight in it, of which nothing can deprive you. Then, too, may you indulge a well-grounded hope, that after a few brief years of existence have passed, you will be eternally re-united to those whom you have loved and lost on earth."

The tears flowed fast down Ellen's cheeks, and her whole frame trembled with emotion, as she said, "I will try, Mr. Morton, to do as you advise; for I know that I am very unhappy now, and what is worse, I can not do any thing to make my father, and William, and Sophia, or any of my friends happy."

"Study, then, to make them happy, and you can do a great deal toward it; besides, the very effort will contribute to your own happiness."

"And when I do wrong, will you be so kind as to tell me, when you are with me? It is true, aunt Caroline often tells me of my faults, but somehow it does not do me much good."

Something like a smile played on Mr. Morton's lips as he replied, "Perhaps you may not always think it very kind, Ellen; but I will certainly point out your faults from time to time; and, perhaps, I may sometimes see subjects of commendation as well as censure in your conduct. Shall I praise you, too, when I see occasion?"

"Indeed, I don't know," said Ellen, "for I love too much to be praised now, by those I love."

"Well, good-by, Ellen, for the present," said Mr. Morton, kindly shaking her by the hand. "I have ten miles to ride now to see a sick parishioner."

Ellen looked with mingled affection and respect at the venerable form of Mr. Morton, as he slowly withdrew; then, seating

herself on a mossy bank, she thought over all he had said, and formed many resolutions for the future, accompanied by an humble prayer to the Giver of all good for strength to perform them.

As Mr. Morton was taking his tea and toast quietly with his sister, on the following morning, he was surprised by a gentle tap at the door of the breakfast-room, and was greeted, upon opening it, by a cheerful laugh from William, and a smile from Ellen, which seemed to say, You see I am following your advice.

"Ellen insisted we should call by and breakfast with you, and it is so seldom she wishes to **pay a visit**, I could not refuse," said William; "besides, I think, **too**, she has another scheme in her head."

"Oh, no, William," said Ellen, coloring a little, "no scheme; I only told you what I hoped."

"Which I will be vain enough to guess," said Mr. Morton, with a kind and encouraging smile. Then, turning to the servant who was waiting in the room, he directed that his pony should be saddled and bridled immediately, as he wished to accompany Ellen and her brother in their morning ride.

"You are very kind, sir," said Ellen; "but I am afraid it will be an interruption."

"On the contrary, quite an agreeable recreation. Meanwhile, you must do honor to Rebecca's rolls, as I propose taking a ride in earnest when we set out." Mr. Morton exerted his powers of conversation, which were of no ordinary cast, to instruct and amuse his youthful companions during their ride; and Ellen and William agreed, as they returned home together, that they knew no one so agreeable as Mr. Morton, except their father; and so kind, and so good.

Mr. Morton returned their visit on the following evening. On opening the door of the sitting-room, he found Ellen gravely initiating Sophia into the mysteries of hemming and stitching, while she read aloud to her a story from the Arabian Nights to amuse her and keep her quiet. It was a touching sight to see one so young as Ellen assuming these maternal offices, while she looked so much as if she needed herself the kind care of a mother, and a tear rose to Mr. Morton's eyes as he looked at these interesting

children. He stroked them kindly on the head, and said to each, "God bless you, my child." Ellen's eyes, too, filled with tears, though she tried to smile, while Sophia bounded from her seat to tell papa, and William, and Mr. Walton, and every body, that Mr. Morton had come, as she knew they would be so glad to hear it.

Mr. Morton continued his friendly exhortations from time to time, to all the inmates of Woodbourne, as both duty and inclination inclined him to do; but Ellen had wound herself closest to his heart, and he perceived, with increasing delight, her efforts to profit by his instructions, and her growing interest in moral and religious subjects.

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CHAPTER IX

I saw her, upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

WORDSWORTH.

AT this period of our narrative Ellen had just completed her twentieth year, while Sophia was entering on her eighteenth. The germs of their natural characters were still very visible in the present characters of these two sisters; but in Ellen it was so subdued and mortified by self-discipline and circumstances, that she was not herself aware how much of her original disposition was still unchanged. It had become the study of Ellen's life, while she was yet almost a child, to make her friends happy, and in her efforts for their happiness, she forgot herself; her own wishes were almost always conquered or subdued, if she found them in opposition to her father's, William's, or Sophia's; and the sacrifice was always so gracefully and naturally made, that no one suspected it to be a sacrifice. It is true, she sometimes regretted deeply that she must bury many of her feelings and opinions in her own heart, because no one appeared to enter into or sympathize with them, though all her friends loved her most tenderly; but she possessed a depth of reflection, an acuteness of sensibility, and vividness of imagination which, while it made her thoughts and feelings sometimes unintelligible, sometimes incomprehensible to her friends, made a strong yearning for sympathy a part of her very nature; and the veriest trifles were capable of giving her

pain or pleasure, when she considered them as signs of the indifference or affection of her friends. But these keen and varying feelings were veiled beneath a manner of so much calmness, dignity, and sweetness, that it was seldom they became apparent to ordinary observers. Indeed, Mrs. Herbert often mentioned Ellen as an example to all young women, of dignified manners, steady principles, well-regulated mind, and calm feelings, while she internally ascribed these qualities to her own good advice and frequent superintendence. It appears, at first, strange, that the manners should so often, in the most sincere persons, be so entirely opposite to the natural character, and yet reflection will show us, it is not unnatural this should be the case, and experience, that it often is so. It is well known that those persons who are least accustomed to meet with sympathy, most habitually repress the expression of their feelings; and as those who are possessed of rare mental powers, or a very unusual degree of sensibility, must necessarily meet with ~~most~~ imperfect sympathy, but from very few, they naturally bury their thoughts and feelings within their own hearts, and assume an appearance of calmness, often of indifference, foreign to their natures.

Yet Ellen was too rational, and possessed too many sources of independent enjoyment, and found too much pleasure in the affection of her friends, to permit these petty woes and regrets to make her unhappy. Her flowers, her friends, the performance of the various duties which devolved on her as mistress of her father's establishment, and her studies, afforded her constant occupation and interest. Mr. Clifford had insisted with so much kindness and delicacy that Mr. Walton should continue to reside with him, after the education of his children was completed, that he had gratefully and joyfully consented to do so, if he could be, he added, of any use. Ellen immediately proposed to devote so much time each day to her literary pursuits, in which she proved satisfactorily that Mr. Walton's assistance would continue to be quite indispensable; a proposal which her father afterward assured her, with a smile, was a great relief to his mind, as he was just thinking it would be necessary to commence the study of some *ology* or language himself, to quiet the old gentleman's mind.

Ellen was spoken of universally in the sphere of her acquaintance as first in talents, in virtue, in all elegant and feminine accomplishments ; a term which was used at the time, chiefly to designate a thorough acquaintance with the most difficult and minute arts of needlework ; and sometimes it also signified, in a few rare cases, that, in addition to a knowledge of the mysteries of the needle, a young lady possessed sufficient musical skill to play a few tunes on the harpsichord or spinet. Ellen had taken musical lessons from her mother, who had possessed great musical taste and skill, on the harp, until the time of her death ; and since that time a fine ear, and strong love for music, combined with exquisite taste, and great efforts on her part to supply, by diligence, the want of instruction, had made her a very pleasing, if not a very scientific performer ; and in a state of society where so few made any pretensions to musical skill, her performance was considered unrivaled.

Though Ellen possessed beauty of a rare and high order, in enumerating her perfections this quality was much the least frequently mentioned, partly, because she had rivals in this respect, who, to persons of ordinary taste, appeared possessed of equal, if not superior pretensions ; and partly, because all felt her to be endowed with qualities of a much higher and rarer kind than mere personal beauty. For, though few can appreciate duly the noblest feelings of the heart, or rarest powers of the mind, yet many possess a sort of instinctive reverence for them, which, in some, is enhanced from the very circumstance of not being able to understand them. Ellen had received many offers of marriage, which, for most other young ladies, would have been considered advantageous ; but all her acquaintances agreed, except the particular friends of the parties concerned, that none of her admirers were matches for her. Ellen never deceived her lovers by coquetry, or mortified them by scorn ; and the calm politeness and delicate consideration with which she treated her rejected suitors conciliated their good-will, and enforced their respect, even while they renounced all further attempts to obtain her love as hopeless. In her own heart not the most transient emotion of preference had ever been excited by any one she had

yet seen; and she quietly settled in her own mind it never would be, as she thought it impossible she should ever see any one who should approach her ideal standard of excellence, and still less likely, that even were this paragon to be met with he would ever fancy her. For Ellen was not only possessed of genuine humility, but her high ideas of excellence, united to a disposition by no means naturally sanguine, made her greatly too distrustful of her own powers and attractions.

Sophia was generally admitted to be very agreeable, to have an excellent heart, and, by many, was considered more beautiful than her sister. Her beauty was certainly of a more popular cast, for all could understand and appreciate it. Her bright and blooming complexion, the golden ringlets that clustered in thick profusion over her fair brow, her clear blue eyes, her rosy lips, on which a smile was almost perpetually hovering, and the joyousness that irradiated her whole face, reminded the beholder of spring, and morning, and Hebe, and all that is fresh, young, and gay.

The favorite friend and chosen companion of the sisters was Olivia Granville. Mrs. Granville had only survived Mrs. Clifford two years; it seems a strange fact that the death of an intelligent and affectionate mother, possessed, too, of rare excellencies of character, could be beneficial to a daughter, and yet it was so. Olivia had learned to depend on her mother for every thing, and was thus becoming selfish and indolent, without being aware of it; moreover, a temper naturally somewhat hasty, was on the point of degenerating into a passionate and self-willed one, from Mrs. Granville's excessive tenderness and indulgence. She never exacted the respect and attention from Olivia which were due to herself; and her daughter, therefore, though tenderly attached to her, was very deficient in respectful deportment and affectionate consideration for her. Mrs. Granville's death was a terrible blow to Olivia, and she then became, for the first time, bitterly and deeply conscious of the many faults in conduct, of which she had been guilty toward her mother, the very recollection of which now pierced her heart like a dagger.

Mr. Granville was a kind man in his feelings, but passionate

in his temper, strong in his prejudices, and strict in managing his household. During Mrs. Granville's life, Olivia had seldom called forth in her father any manifestations of these traits of character, for her mother was always ready to stand as a mediator between them, and all Olivia's little misdemeanors or negligences were repaired or concealed by the ever-watchful care of a mother, ready to ward off every evil, however slight, from the darling of her heart. She thought no trouble or inconvenience too much to save Olivia from a reprimand, which would have given her far more pain than Olivia herself would have experienced. Thrown upon her own resources, and compelled to consult the humors and wishes of her father, Olivia acquired an energy and independence of character, and a power of self-control, which she would never otherwise have attained; and, though she had still a little too much pride, a little too much self-will, and was rather too hasty in her temper, yet her warm and genuine feelings, the strength and vivacity of her mind, her openness of heart, and decision of character, made her, on the whole, a charming and useful woman. Few were warmer in their friendships than Olivia Granville, and there were none who would stick more closely by a friend, through good and evil report; indeed, she delighted, when her friends were assailed, to show how much she scorned the opinion of the world, by public and increased demonstrations of regard and respect toward any friend who she thought had met with neglect or unjust censure.

William Clifford was now nearly twenty-two years of age; he had lived entirely at home, with the exception of two years spent at William and Mary College, rather for the sake of the discipline of mind and character which a public institution for education offers, and the opportunity of forming associates and acquaintances among the rising generation of his native land, than on account of any positive knowledge Mr. Clifford expected him to acquire. Mr. Clifford thought, with William's thirst for knowledge, and his capacity for acquiring it, aided by a well-chosen library, and the assistance of a man of deep and various learning, such as Mr. Walton, he would probably have acquired more book knowledge at home; but he thought, too, that the exclusiveness

necessarily produced by an intercourse with very few persons, however excellent or beloved they might be, would be apt to unfit the mind and heart to grapple with the trials and discharge the duties which await all men who take an active and useful part in life.

And from William he hoped much, nor would his expectations have appeared unreasonable to the most impartial judge. There was a manly simplicity, a lofty and serious bearing from a boy about him, which marked him, even to ordinary observers, as one set apart by nature from the common herd of mankind. His heart glowed with the warmest enthusiasm for all that was lofty or noble, patriotism in his heart was rather a passion than a sentiment. His was indeed the stuff of which heroes are made ; but there was nothing he so much scorned as a parade of fine or lofty feelings, and his manner was peculiarly distinguished by calm and sincere simplicity.

The various subjects of complaint and discontent in the colonies, which began to occupy a large portion of the thoughts, and awaken strong feelings in the hearts of the reflecting and patriotic, were matters of deep interest and consideration to William Clifford ; though, that Virginia should throw off her allegiance to the mother country, had never yet formed a part of his plans or wishes. But the prosperity of his native State was the first and warmest wish of his heart ; and as he looked around on the lovely land of his birth, he vowed internally to devote himself to her whether in weal or woe ; and he hoped to see the day when she would look proudly up, and take that place among nations to which her natural advantages and her brave, generous, and talented children entitled her.

CHAPTER X.

Here's snip and nip, and cut, and slish and slash,
Like to a ceuser in a barber's shop;
Why what a devil's name, tailor, call'st thou this?

Taming of the Shrew.

It had now been several years since Mr. Clifford had received a letter from Lord Fitz-Clare, and after writing many times without receiving a reply, he discontinued the practice, and concluded his brother was perhaps absorbed in public cares, or unhappy in his domestic relations; for, though he looked no longer exclusively at the bright side of things, he was still as much disposed to form charitable judgments as he had ever been. It was therefore with scarcely less surprise than pleasure, that he recognized Lord Fitz-Clare's handwriting in the superscription of a letter addressed to himself. It was sealed with black, and though Lord Fitz-Clare never descended to the weakness of complaint, still the whole tone of the letter showed that the writer was any thing but happy, which to Mr. Clifford's heart would have been naturally enough accounted for by the death of one of his younger children announced in the letter; but his mention of this loss was so calm and brief, that it was impossible to assign to this circumstance the deep and settled dissatisfaction and bitterness of spirit which pervaded the whole epistle. Lord Fitz-Clare excused his long silence by ascribing it to the pressure of public cares and domestic vexations, and concluded his letter by recommending his second son, Edgar, to his brother's kindness and protection, as various reasons had determined him to send him to Virginia, to settle a tract of land and reside there for a year or two. His lungs were delicate, and his physician had advised that he should try a milder climate; and, moreover, he added, Edgar had formed some intimacies he felt particularly desirous to break up, and thought this change of residence would be the most ef-

fectual plan of doing so, while it would be the means of laying the foundation of his own future fortunes; for his numerous family, added to heavy pecuniary embarrassments, occasioned chiefly by the extravagance of Lady Fitz-Claire, would prevent his making a liberal provision for his younger children. He said he wished his son to purchase land as near to his brother as possible to be procured, and confided him implicitly to his care and protection. He added a few expressions of interest and some inquiries respecting Mr. Clifford's family, which, to one less disposed to judge kindly, would have appeared rather polite than brotherly.

But Richard Clifford's heart was warmed with kindness and that strong brotherly love which neither time, absence, nor neglect had been able to vanquish. He thought his brother could not have given him a stronger proof of confidence and affection, than in thus trusting his son to his care, and he resolved that nothing should be wanting on his part to supply to him the place of a father. He was so much accustomed to meet with sympathy in his joys and sorrows from his family, that he felt a sensation of disappointment upon looking around at the countenances of his children, to observe that Ellen's face wore an expression of unusual seriousness.

"Well, what is the matter, Ellen? there seems to be something in this business which does not please you. I thought you would have been especially gratified to receive as a member of our family the son of my only brother."

Ellen felt sensibly the tender yet reproachful tone with which her father uttered these few words, and the color mounted in her cheek as she replied: "You will believe me, I am sure, papa, when I say that I am prepared to receive my cousin as a brother, and to feel toward him as such, if he will permit me; but then you will, I hope, excuse the natural infirmity of my disposition, which makes me fear change, we are so happy in each other now."

There was something in the tone, manner, and sentiment expressed by his daughter, that so strikingly recalled her mother at this moment, to Mr. Clifford's mind, that a shade of sad, yet tender feeling, instantly passed over his countenance, and taking

Ellen's hand kindly within his own, he said, "I am sure no unkind, ungenerous, or selfish feeling could enter your heart, my dear, but you must learn to hope a little more. You have, I know, feelings of humanity for all your fellow creatures, but your affections have been too fondly, too exclusively devoted to your own little family circle; any object that could divide or share them would exert a beneficial influence on your character."

"I dare say," said William, laughing, "the remnant of affection which Ellen can spare from ourselves, will be more than Sophia and myself together can feel. It needs no conjurer to tell who will be kindest, most patient, and most constant in affection at last."

"Thank you, Mr. William," said Sophia, in a half-pleased, half-vexed tone; "then you think Ellen will make a better friend than I shall."

"Nay," said William, "I leave that question to your own judgment and candor to decide, my dear sister."

The tidings that a young Englishman, the son, too, of a nobleman—for even since the institutions of the United States have become decidedly republican, the respect attached to titles, whether founded in nature or not, I will not pretend to decide, has not yet been eradicated—was coming to reside at Woodbourne, created no small sensation in the circle of their intimate acquaintance.

Olivia and Sophia held at least fifty consultations as to the best means of repairing some old articles of furniture, banishing others, and procuring new articles in their places, and making arrangements in various household matters, in such a manner as might make the most favorable impression on the son of Lord Fitz-Clare. Ellen preserved the most provoking imperturbability, and made not even a single purchase to avoid the horror of looking as if she had just come out of the ark, as Sophia said; but she assisted Olivia and Sophia in shaping and fashioning the materials they had purchased, and advised them according to her taste and knowledge—of the latter, alas! as it respected fashion, she had but a small share, a misfortune common then to ladies residing in country-places in a colony. There were then no steam-boats, no railroads, none of those almost magical contrivances for

annihilating time and space, which waft the fashions now "from Indus to the pole," with a celerity, which makes the well-known story of the flying chest but a tame reality in comparison. Then, too, the weary wight must plod on through all the intricacies of flounces, plaiting, and furbelows alone, for a mantua-maker in Virginia would have been as difficult to procure as a bird of Paradise, and even could she have been obtained the ladies would have hesitated to avail themselves of her services, lest it might have been considered that such an action indicated either a deficiency in the mysteries of the needle, or a want of industry, on both of which qualities the Virginian ladies especially prided themselves.

But Sophia and Olivia, who was so frequent a guest and so intimate a friend that she might almost have been considered as a member of the family, labored on with unceasing industry, notwithstanding the uncomfortable reflection which occasionally obtruded itself, that with all their exertions they might appear as obsolete in their fashions to Edgar Clifford as Ellen herself, with the additional disadvantage of the ridicule always attached to unsuccessful pretensions.

As they were assembled in the sitting-room at Woodbourne, to finish off some of the articles of dress, nearly concluded with infinite toil, William Clifford entered, his eyes kindling with delight, but with that abstracted expression that showed plainly he was taking no cognizance of things without. He held in his hand a volume of Milton's Prose Works, and, seating himself, said:

"I never before understood how prose could be more musical even than poetry; and yet, the beauty, the melody of the language, is lost in the noble and inspiring sentiments of which it is a vehicle—it swells my heart, like the sound of a trumpet. Only listen—"

And he read aloud one of those noble passages to be found in many parts of Milton's prose writings, with a rich sweetness of tone and earnestness of manner, which might well have excited attention, even had the subject been trivial or uninteresting; but just here the plaiting of the brocade had become too difficult and too intricate to admit of any rival in the attention of the fair

seamstresses—the scissors dropped twice from Olivia's hands in the confusion of attempting to listen while she continued her work. Meanwhile, Sophia was going through one of those silent rustling searches, which are so much more annoying than a downright bustle; and just as William had concluded the passage and looked around on his auditors for sympathy and admiration, Sophia was whispering to Olivia, and presenting her work for her inspection to know how it would do. Ellen's eye alone showed that she perceived and appreciated the noble beauty of the writing.

"What is the matter?" said William, in a half-contemptuous tone, as he looked around on the various materials of dress scattered about, which gave the room the air of a workshop. "What is the use or the meaning of this eternal flouncing or frilling, or whatever it may be; it really appears to have absorbed every other idea?"

Olivia and Sophia both colored deeply with mingled emotions of shame, mortification, and displeasure, while Sophia answered in rather a hasty tone, that she saw nothing so strange or unreasonable in making up clothes, especially as she knew of no expedient to avoid this necessary trouble.

"But Ellen does not appear to labor under any such necessity; how does she avoid it?"

"Well, all persons can not be alike; nor do I think Ellen's example worthy of imitation in this instance, as there is a sort of regard to appearances, which self-respect and a proper consideration for the opinion of the world requires," said Sophia, rather gravely.

"Well," said William, with a provoking smile, "I must yield, for I have scarcely ever heard you express so solemn a sentiment in so imposing a manner. I will not even ask why self-respect imposes these Herculean labors, nor whether the opinion of the world and the opinion of Edgar Clifford are synonymous terms?"

"Really, Mr. Clifford," said Olivia, a term which she never used but when she was vexed, "this is carrying things rather too far; I hope your cousin will at least be able to give some lessons in politeness."

William saw, from the slight quivering of Olivia's lip, and the

deepening color in her cheek, that she was, at least, as much hurt as vexed, and immediately replied in a more serious tone and softened manner :

" I hope so, too, Olivia, for I will not call you Miss Granville. I should be happy to take lessons from him in any thing worth learning ; and no one can esteem more highly than I do the politeness that springs from the heart, which I hope does not require that we should consider our friends absolutely perfect."

" Certainly not," said Olivia, somewhat appeased, rather, however, by the manner in which these words were uttered, than their matter ; " but then some latitude must be allowed for differences of opinion among friends, particularly in a case where it is not possible you can be so good a judge of what is necessary or proper as ourselves. You need not, therefore, have been so severe in your censures."

William smiled again, and replied, " Perhaps I spoke too hastily, though I certainly did not mean to be severe ; yet you must excuse the natural ebullitions of mortified vanity at finding that Milton and I were so entirely thrown in the shade by brocade and Edgar Clifford ; and, you must likewise pardon me for saying, that although I do not pretend to be so good a judge of what is necessary or proper on such occasions for a lady's wardrobe, as yourselves, still I judge in this matter by general principles in which I can not be mistaken."

" Only listen," said Sophia, laughing, " he is gravely marshaling a host of reasons and general principles against our poor flounces and brocades."

" Well," said William, " only wait until I have arranged them, and although few, you will find that they are strong ; the first is, that there are not many things in the world worth so many days of anxious and uneasy deliberation and incessant toil, admitting the result to be exactly what you desire to produce, and that you were thought by our formidable cousin, to be dressed with the utmost elegance and propriety, according to the latest London fashions."

" Oh, William, how can you talk so ?" said Olivia and Sophia in a breath.

"But you have not heard the worst of it yet," said William, laughing. "The chances are more than a million to one against your being successful—indeed, much more; nothing short of inspiration could give the necessary knowledge to enable you to make a fashionable suit of clothes. Ain I not right, Ellen?"

"Ah, this is the unkindest cut of all," said Ellen; "and, perhaps, this last reflection has chiefly induced me to make no effort to avoid the disgrace of appearing old-fashioned, as it will be some consolation to my pride that I made no attempt to be otherwise. But come," she added, as she saw Olivia and Sophia were somewhat vexed and disconcerted, "you must let me sing and play to you on the harp a very sweet old ballad I learned from Miss Rebecca Morton. I think, Olivia, it will suit your taste particularly."

Olivia was very fond of music, and she listened with unaffected delight to the touching and thrilling melody of Ellen's rich and plaintive voice; the brocade was forgotten, and William was gratified at seeing the labors of the needle suspended for the remainder of the evening. Neither of the ladies, however, acknowledged that there was any justice in his remarks, or that they had produced the least effect on their conduct; and William was too wise to appear to notice the change, or express the smallest satisfaction at it.

CHAPTER XI.

His years but young, but his experience old;
His head unmelow'd, but his judgment ripe;
And in a word
He is complete in feature as in mind,
With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

THE last trimmings had not been added to the dresses, the last polish had not been given to the shining furniture, the last cakes had not been baked, or the last jellies made, before the guest, or, rather, the new inmate, as he was now to be, who had caused all these labors dire, arrived. Olivia and Sophia both felt at his entrance, as if these efforts were not nearly so great as they should have been, to prepare for such a guest. Edgar Clifford was, indeed, surpassingly handsome; but even the natural advantages of beauty did not so much captivate the beholder, as an air of easy and graceful superiority, mingled with that dignified reserve, which, from exciting the imagination, always imparts a high degree of interest.

Mr. Clifford received the stranger with an affectionate warmth, which resembled rather the welcome of a father than of an uncle, and every member of the family studied in their several ways to make him feel himself one of them. Yet Ellen, though she studied his accommodation, and paid him those delicate attentions which are so grateful to the heart, made less effort to excite personal interest toward herself than any of the circle. It was evident that she wished him to be pleased, and equally obvious that she felt no particular anxiety that he should be pleased with her. Though perfectly willing to join in conversation, she seemed always to yield with graceful cheerfulness to Olivia and Sophia, who used their utmost abilities to entertain and amuse him, not, however, from the desire of making a conquest, for

Olivia was attached to William Clifford, with that early love which is so mingled with every association that it is difficult to ascertain its strength, because it becomes a part of the being. And Sophia dreamed not of love in seeking to appear advantageously in the eyes of her cousin ; but it must be admitted that a small alloy of vanity mingled with the good-humored wish which prompted their efforts to please him and excite his admiration. They wished him to be pleased, partly for his sake, partly for their own ; and, as neither of them were deficient in confidence in their own powers of pleasing, they did not doubt the result.

It was, therefore, a matter of some surprise to themselves, and no less so to Ellen, to find that Edgar Clifford would often disengage himself from their conversation, and decline their proffered plans of amusement to seat himself beside Ellen, when she was engaged in some quiet occupation apart. The quiet dignity and inexpressible gentleness of her manners, her delicate and thoughtful consideration for every member of the family, which was constantly felt, though never obtruding itself, which never seemed to seek any reward beyond the pleasure of bestowing happiness ; the graceful cheerfulness with which she yielded the fore-ground in conversation to Olivia and Sophia, and the unaffected satisfaction she manifested whenever either of them appeared to peculiar advantage, first attracted, then riveted the attention of Edgar Clifford to herself. What could be the secret springs of action ? what could be the hidden sources of feeling which prompted conduct so extraordinary ? It was impossible to believe her conduct affected, yet there was nothing in his philosophy to explain it ; and he determined to study her character, and endeavor, if possible, to solve the mystery. Perhaps what chiefly stimulated his curiosity was her manifest indifference about attracting his admiration, or awakening any particular feeling of preference toward herself, combined with the most delicate attention to his accommodation and efforts to promote his amusement, which, so far from wishing to display, she seemed rather to conceal, satisfied, if the effect was to give pleasure, without seeking or wishing to make it apparent that it was caused by herself.

There was something, too, in the style of Ellen's beauty which awakened his interest and excited his imagination, and he sought to understand the deep and tender feelings, to read the beautiful and often lofty thoughts which mirrored themselves in her clear, dark eye, whose lustre was always fitting and changing, like lights and shadows passing over a field. The color, too, which went and came in her naturally somewhat pale cheek, denoted unusual sensibility of heart and delicacy of constitution—a connection always interesting, as it evinces the strength and power of that spiritual nature which “o'erinforms the tenement of clay,” and is breaking down the walls of its earthly dwelling, which, however fair and noble the edifice may be, affords but a faint type and shadow of the beauty of the glorious spirit within.

Edgar Clifford found every day increasing interest in Ellen's conversation, as he continually discovered new beauties of mind and heart, some of which, it is true, he did not understand; but even these interested him, as they excited his curiosity; and the gentle playfulness of Ellen's manner and thoughts, as she became more familiar, had for him far greater charms than the sparkling vivacity of Sophia, which amused for one minute to be forgotten the next, or the varied and easy conversation, mixed with a fund of strong, practical good sense, of Olivia Granville. Yet he did not manifest this preference of Ellen in so strong a degree, by any means, as he felt it, for his acquaintance with the world led him to believe that such a sentiment could not be pleasing to either of the other ladies; and he would generally watch opportunities of seeking Ellen's conversation, when he thought it would be least observed by the other members of the family. Many motives soon almost insensibly combined to lead him rather to conceal than display the peculiar pleasure he felt in Ellen's society. And Ellen was at first simply surprised, then gratified to find that her conversation was so evidently interesting to one so graceful, so superior in manner, so refined, and even fastidious in taste, as Edgar Clifford. She had taken it for granted that he would find most interest and amusement in the company of Olivia and Sophia; but though no one possessed deeper or more unaffected humility than Ellen, she was likewise gifted

with unusual powers of discernment on any subject that excited her attention ; and she could not help perceiving that Edgar Clifford took more interest and pleasure in her conversation than in that of any other member of the family ; nor could she be insensible to the unusual charms which fine elocution, rich and varied language, versatility of talent, which changed with equal ease from "gay to grave, from lively to severe," imparted to the conversation of Edgar Clifford. Almost for the first time she felt all the powers of her mind fully called forth, and fully appreciated ; for though her brother and father both possessed minds of superior strength and elevation, yet their studies and pursuits had been so differently directed from hers—such different faculties of mind had been strengthened and awakened, that many of her peculiar tastes found nothing corresponding in theirs, and in many of the regions peopled by her rich and powerful imagination, she dwelt alone. But Edgar Clifford had studied the same languages with herself ; he admired the same poetry ; he possessed, like her, a vivid and poetic imagination, and his conversation developed and called forth, in Ellen's mind, powers and beauties hitherto unknown to herself.

As Ellen was sitting alone one morning in the library, a room of which she was often for hours the only occupant, and bending over an old volume of Spanish ballads with deep interest and attention, she started upon looking up to find Edgar Clifford standing beside her. He smiled at observing her surprise, and said, "You must excuse my thus intruding on you ; and still more, the impertinent curiosity, which almost irresistibly impelled me just to steal a glance over the page which interested you so deeply."

"Oh, it is no intrusion," replied Ellen, recovering her usual calm sweetness of manner ; "and to show you that I forgive what you call impertinent curiosity, I will beg your assistance in rendering this difficult passage. You told me last night that you were familiar with the Spanish language."

"Most willingly," said Edgar with a gratified smile. "It is the native language of my mother, and I am better versed in this than in any of the modern tongues of Europe, so you see I

cast aside all the modest prefaces which are usual on such occasions."

"And which I am glad you do not consider as necessary, as it is a very poor sort of affectation, which leads us to disclaim knowledge we are conscious of possessing, and one of which I hope you are incapable."

"Ah, my fair cousin, you should have said, Of which I am sure you are incapable; how cautious, how distrustful that sounds—Of which I hope you are incapable; but no matter, the simple truth is new to me, and pleasing on that account."

"You must," said Ellen, smiling, "pardon plain, unvarnished truth in one who has been nurtured in the wild woods of Virginia, far from courts and palaces; and it is well you like it, as I fear my rustic habits in this respect are incurable."

"Nay, do not apply such words to yourself, there are some persons as well as things superior to fashion, beyond it. Who, that has any taste, would not prefer the wild rose that grows in all the luxuriance of natural beauty, and sheds its fragrance in the free air of heaven, to the costly gem which glitters in courts and palaces?"

Ellen colored slightly and said, as she looked in his face with an ingenuous smile, "I hope, but am not sure, that you are incapable of ridiculing me; but—"

"Ridicule *you*? could you seriously suspect me of such a thing?" he replied, with an air of visible mortification; "how little do you understand my heart or feelings!"

"Come," said Ellen, "you must not take it so seriously; I only suspected you of a kind wish to reassure and please me, to console me for having been deprived of the advantages of what is called polished and fashionable society; but do not let us waste our time by talking longer about the matter, we have forgotten the Spanish ballad entirely."

There was a guilelessness, a simple and gentle sincerity in all that Ellen said or did, which carried to the heart of the beholder an irresistible conviction of her truth and kindness. Edgar smiled, and seating himself beside her, gave a clear, simple, yet beautiful translation of the ballad.

"How perfectly familiar you are with the language; and I say only the simple truth," said Ellen with a smile, "when I pronounce your translation to be as beautiful as it is faithful; you have made at once clear to me, what has been puzzling me for the last hour."

"I have had unusual advantages in studying the Spanish language, as my mother spoke it to us as frequently as English, when we were children; and it would give me great pleasure to afford you any assistance in my power. If you have time to read Spanish with me only one hour in each day for a few months, I am sure I could make you almost as good a scholar as myself, since truth is the order of the day," he added, with a smile.

"Thank you," said Ellen; "though I can not let you suppose the task of instruction will be so easy as you imagine. Mr. Walton knows very little of Spanish, and my very imperfect knowledge has been acquired chiefly by my own efforts, so that I will only consent to accept your assistance, on condition of your promising, in good faith, to discontinue the task if it becomes wearisome."

"Oh, yes, I will promise any thing if you require it; though I am perfectly certain such a task never can become wearisome."

Ellen thanked him with a look and a smile, and he proposed to commence the first lesson immediately. A few verses were read, which awakened in Edgar's mind a train of associations, and they gave rise to eulogiums and remarks from him, of such eloquence and beauty, that Ellen, carried away by the subject, again forgot the lesson, and the book lay open before them, when Sophia entered with a light, quick step, saying in a gay tone:

"What are you two doing here over a musty old volume, when every thing is so beautiful and pleasant without? and the horses are at the door for the ride we have so long promised you, Edgar. Ellen, I have ordered your pony to be saddled for Olivia."

"But will you not then accompany us?" said Edgar, closing the volume, and turning to Ellen.

"Oh, no," said Ellen, "I can not disappoint Olivia."

"And I dare say you had rather pore over an old volume, than take the prettiest ride in the world?" said Sophia.

"I can always find something to occupy and interest me, so you need not think of me," said Ellen, evading the question, as she really could not repress an emotion of disappointment at missing the ride.

"It is well to be so happily constituted," said Sophia, with a smile; "for my part I can boast of no philosophy. And now, Ellen, will you be so kind as to lend Olivia your shawl? hers was forgotten at home, and the air is rather cool without one.

"Certainly," said Ellen, and as she turned to leave the room; Edgar, following her to the door, said, in a low voice:

"I can not be reconciled to losing your company, unless you promise to take the same ride with me another time."

"You are very kind," replied Ellen, in a tone of simplicity, which plainly evinced that she thought the proposal was made rather with a view to her gratification than his own; "but you must not think I am so childish as to be seriously disappointed at missing a ride."

"And you must not believe me so disinterested as to make the proposal for your gratification, or so vain; indeed, I must be candid enough to acknowledge it was chiefly for my own."

Edgar thought the smile with which Ellen answered this really sincere speech, the sweetest he had ever beheld; and had it not been that the ride had been proposed expressly for his gratification, he would have declined being one of the party, to have remained at home with her. But then, the worldly prudence, of which he had inherited a large portion from his father, whispered, too, that it would have a marked and strange appearance which he greatly wished to avoid.

CHAPTER XII.

What is it that you would impart to me ?
If it be aught towards the general good
Set honor in one eye, and death i' the other,
And I will look on both indifferently :
For let the gods so speed me, as I love
The name of honor more than I fear death.

Julius Cæsar.

THE beautiful days of autumn were rapidly passing away, the gorgeous glories of the forest, which from their varied and splendid coloring, give to this season, in Virginia, a character of bright magnificence, were fast changing into those dark and sombre hues, which speak to the heart of immediate decay and dissolution. But to the inmates of Woodbourne, each season had its own beauties, its appropriate pleasures, and, happy in each other and in their own resources, they looked forward with satisfaction to the quiet and social pleasures of the fireside, where the happiest hours of life are past, to those whose minds and hearts are capable, when brought into collision, of eliciting gay fancies, lofty thoughts, kind and deep feelings. And if their domestic circle had always possessed charms and pleasures of no ordinary description, how greatly were these increased by the almost unequalled fascinations of Edgar Clifford's society. True, he was changeful in his mood, at times thoughtful, melancholy almost to moodiness, and when these shadows came over him, he shunned all society but Ellen Clifford's ; yet there was not the most distant approach to gallantry in his manner toward her, nor did the possibility of any emotion of love rising between them, appear to have entered the thoughts of any member of the family. These fits of sadness were often succeeded by the most playful and brilliant gayety, yet there was elegance and intellect even in his gayest trifling, not only entertaining but interesting.

In all matters of business he seemed to surrender himself completely into the hands of his uncle, Mr. Clifford, who purchased for him a fine tract of land at a few miles' distance from his own, and assisted him in making all necessary arrangements for its cultivation. William Clifford's deportment toward his cousin was characterized by a candid and manly kindness, which was natural to him, and there were many subjects on which they conversed together with interest. Literary tastes and superior intellectual powers frequently united their minds, but their hearts were like parallel lines, which may be continued forever without meeting. William Clifford's favorite pursuits were all of a serious, a lofty, an ennobling character; he could appreciate all that was noble or sublime in poetry, and his mind was also capable of enjoying the lighter graces and beauties of literature, but his heart and soul were engrossed by more serious studies, which excited the deepest and most absorbing interest. History, politics, all knowledge connected with the welfare of nations, were the subjects to which he devoted himself, for the sake of his own loved country. He felt deeply the oppressions under which the colonies then suffered, but the actual evils which they endured were slight compared with the violation of those fundamental principles of liberty, which all of English descent were taught to consider as their precious and inalienable birthright, won for them by the toils, the tears, the blood of martyrs to the holy cause of freedom, through so many succeeding generations. His heart swelled with proud and sad indignation at the reflection, that the mother-country, which should have fostered and cherished the child of her bosom, sought to convert its free and filial obedience into slavish submission; and bright visions of the freedom and independence of his native land floated before him, though he knew the times were not yet ripe for the avowal of his wishes, yet he cherished them in his inmost heart, and might truly have said of his country, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning."

Yet, though his heart was thus kindled with the purest, the most ardent patriotism, deep and tender domestic affection, strong as life itself, dwelt within, and even a softer sentiment had stolen

there, to which, in the present state of his feelings, he would have certainly denied entrance, had it not taken possession ere he was sensible of its approach. He had grown up with Olivia Granville, and had formed a strong attachment for her, long before he thought of analyzing his feelings, or of understanding them. He had always treated her with the same open and natural kindness which he manifested toward his own sisters, and it would have been difficult for a stranger to have detected any difference in his manner toward them. He had never been fond of love verses or romance, and would have been pronounced by ninety-nine persons out of a hundred to be perfectly free from all the symptoms that are usually said to attend love. It is not strange, then, that it should have been long before he himself made the discovery, and it was no sooner made than he resolved to suppress every appearance and every declaration of his love.

He saw in the present state of the country, and foresaw in the events which might hereafter arise, that the devotion which he had internally vowed to Virginia, whether in weal or woe, must be utterly incompatible with the formation of the closest of domestic ties, unless he exposed his own firmness and Olivia's peace of mind to trials more severe than human nature might be able to withstand. Moreover, Mr. Granville was a Tory, attached with a blind and bigoted partiality to every thing English, and loving the constitution and laws of England, rather from a principle of veneration to the established order of things, than from an attachment to liberty for its own sake. William Clifford felt that the course which his feelings and principles would alike prompt him to pursue, must forbid him to hope that he would ever sanction an union with his daughter. Honor then forbade his making any avowal of his sentiments to Olivia, and though he sometimes thought she reciprocated his attachment, he made no effort to excite or preserve in her mind, if it already existed, any such feeling toward himself, but carefully forbore any manifestation of peculiar tenderness or interest toward her. He knew the path of duty and honor, and thought not for a moment of swerving from it, though he was fully aware and deeply sensible of its dangers and difficulties, and the happiness which he turned from

in pursuing it. But in his heart was the old Roman spirit of proud endurance, mingled with that pure and ardent patriotism, which puts modern nations to shame—and which so distinguished the days of the republic—united to that untiring and unconquerable spirit of Christian hope and faith, which, piercing with its eagle eye through the clouds that envelop its mortal path, sees and believes that truth and justice must finally prevail, and is willing to spend and be spent in the great and glorious cause of the true and the good.

On all these lofty themes of thought and serious subjects of interest, it was difficult to discover what Edgar Clifford's views or sentiments were, as he spoke so gayly, so lightly, and so differently about them, as his moods varied—avoiding every thing like grave discussion or argument, though the strength and subtlety of his intellect gave him peculiar advantages in the latter species of intellectual gladiatorship, when he could be induced to enter the arena. Ellen observed this with disappointment and surprise, and she sought to discover with much interest why he thus refrained from expressing his opinions on serious subjects. But whenever a grave turn was given to the conversation—at least, whenever it turned on moral or religious subjects, Edgar would change the theme; and once, on an occasion of this nature, he said, in reply to an observation from Ellen: "My dear cousin, would that I were pure and good as yourself, and could any thing make me so, it would be your influence; but for this I can not hope; I can not hope that—" He paused suddenly, apparently in deep emotion, then added, with an air of forced gayety: "At present these serious subjects are to me sad themes of reflection, let me then enjoy this short gleam of sunshine, which may perhaps never return." Saying this, he rose and quitted the room suddenly, leaving Ellen grave and silent, from many contrary, agitating emotions.

CHAPTER XIII.

With his ice and snow and rime,
Let bleak winter sternly come;
There is not a sunnier clime
Than the love-lit winter home.

A. A. WATTS.

It was late in a gloomy December evening, that Mr. ~~Morton~~ entered the sitting-room at Woodbourne, and found it ~~empty~~, though the cheerful fire of huge oak logs showed that it was not deserted by its inmates. He rang the bell for a servant, and inquired for the different members of the family. He was told that Mr. Clifford had taken a ride to see a sick neighbor, that William Clifford had gone for a few days to Williamsburgh, Sophia and Edgar Clifford were on a visit to Mr. Granville's, and Miss Ellen was very busy in the housekeeper's room.

"Go then," said Mr. Morton, "and tell Ellen I am here, and would be glad to see her for a few minutes, if she can spare time from her employments."

Ellen came almost immediately, with her usual sweet smile of welcome; but her cheek was flushed, her hand dry and hot, and her affectionate greetings were returned in a low and languid tone, which indicated fatigue.

Mr. Morton looked at her with affectionate concern, for he felt a truly paternal love for her, and said:

"You do not seem well, Ellen. What is the matter? Why has Sophia left you alone, when you are so evidently indisposed? and what are you worrying yourself about?"

"Oh, there is ~~not~~ much the matter with me," replied Ellen. "It is true I am slightly indisposed from the effects of a cold. Sophia has gone home with Olivia, to see her relations the Woodvilles, who have just arrived from Maryland; and I have been trying to prepare a ~~dessert~~, as they are to dine with us to-mor-

row. The housekeeper is herself much indisposed, and to spare her the fatigue, I have been superintending all the complicated operations of making pastry, jellies, custards, and sweetmeats; but my toils were nearly over when you arrived, and we can now enjoy a quiet cup of tea together, for my father will scarcely be in for some time."

"How very characteristic your speech is, Ellen; to save a sick housekeeper from fatigue, you have gone through all the drudgery of preparation for company, when you were sick yourself; and no doubt, too, considered, in these preparations, Sophia's taste for show, rather than the dictates of your own good sense and simple taste; and you have also, I suppose, not only permitted, but encouraged her to act selfishly, by leaving you sick and alone, to suffer all the fatigue for her gratification, while she enjoys herself. Even our best feelings may be carried to excess, Ellen."

"Indeed," said Ellen, "I can not claim the merit of disinterestedness, as it really gives me more pleasure to afford Sophia any gratification than to enjoy it myself; moreover, as she is so much fonder of company than I am, so much gayer in her natural disposition, it would be a pity to deprive her of an enjoyment, for my sake, which I should not be half so capable of feeling as herself."

"It is so unnecessary to caution most persons against disinterestedness, against too much consideration for others and too little for themselves, that we meet with little or no instruction as it regards our duty on this point in moral or religious writings—nothing that is explicit even in the Holy Scripture itself. True it is, that those who study the sacred pages of revelation with all their minds and hearts, and thus learn rightly to divide the word of truth, and balance conflicting, or apparently conflicting duties against each other, will draw from thence principles of action, so luminous and so comprehensive as to guide them aright in every imaginable situation of life; but few, very few possess patience, humility, and impartiality of mind for such a research. Believe me, then, my dear, if you have not yet made the discovery for yourself, that you have fallen into an error dangerous to your own peace of mind, injurious to the character of those you love.

Nothing is easier than to become selfish and inconsiderate in our conduct toward our friends, especially where they exact nothing ; we learn to consider their most painful sacrifices as mere things of course, or satisfy our consciences by endeavoring to believe that they are no sacrifices at all."

"This is indeed a painful, and I would fain hope, a somewhat too severe view of poor human nature," replied Ellen, in a tone serious almost to sadness—for her own heart partly acknowledged the justice of Mr. Morton's remarks ; and though she had earnestly persuaded Sophia to accompany Olivia home, as she perceived she wished to do so, yet she could not help feeling at the same time, that nothing could have induced her to have left Sophia indisposed and alone for several days. The note, too, which she had received from Sophia by a negro boy from Mr. Granville's, entreating her to try to have every thing in as handsome a style as possible, had occasioned a deeper feeling of mortification than she had chosen to acknowledge to herself.

"It is painful, but most true," rejoined Mr. Morton ; "yet I know that your own happiness depends so much on contributing to the happiness of others, that I can think of but one consideration to urge which could have power to cure the excess of this feeling, this defect in your character, for so I must call it, springing from the best and loveliest feelings of our nature : which is, that in considering what will promote the moral perfection of our friends, we lay the surest foundation for their happiness. If habits of self-denial, of consideration for others, contribute to purify and perfect our own hearts, are they not equally necessary to our friends, who possess the same infirmities, the same frail and corrupt nature ? It is but a cruel kindness, that bestows transient earthly gratification at the expense of one of those moral feelings, which continue to produce happiness when the earth itself has vanished away, and the heavens have withered like a parched scroll."

"I am aware," said Ellen, "that I shrink with weakness at the thought of giving pain to any one, especially to those I love, even when it is necessary ; and am deeply sensible that this is a defect of character. But I had supposed that not only my in-

clination, but my duty, lay in preferring the gratification of others to my own."

"Even disinterestedness, the loveliest, the purest of virtues, may be carried to excess. There is a certain respect, a certain consideration, a certain regard due to ourselves as well as to others; it is necessary to preserve that moral influence and weight of character, which is one of the talents God has committed to our charge."

"I will endeavor that your counsel shall not be lost on me," replied Ellen, in a tone of affectionate humility, which went to Mr. Morton's heart. She rose as she uttered these words, and was about to leave the room, when Mr. Morton called her back, saying:

"Now, Ellen, I guess your errand, and must forbid it. Are you not going to order something particularly nice—such as you think I could fancy for my supper, as a sort of practical commentary on my discourse?"

Ellen blushed a little, and acknowledged that she had some such design, but that it would not be attended with the slightest additional trouble.

"However that may be," said Mr. Morton, smiling, "it shall not be done. You may ring the bell for a servant, if there are any necessary orders to be given; but nothing must be added, on my account, to your usual supper; nor must you take any farther trouble about it; you look completely exhausted, and quite feverish."

"Well, you shall see how obedient I am," replied Ellen, ringing the bell. John entered to receive her commands, which were issued in a low voice; then resuming her seat by Mr. Morton, her attention was soon absorbed by his animated and interesting conversation.

Their simple supper was neatly spread, and the tea-urn was hissing on the table before Ellen was aware that it was preparing—so entirely was her attention occupied by Mr. Morton's discourse; then suddenly recollecting Mr. Walton, she desired John to tell him that supper was waiting.

"I has told him twice, Miss Ellen," replied John. "The first

time I could not make him hear me ; and the last time, as I told him, he seemed to signify that I had better go away, and mind my own business."

"Was he reading?" inquired Ellen.

"O yes, madam."

"Then I had better go myself, or he will forget his supper altogether, poor old gentleman." Ellen went immediately to the study, where she found Mr. Walton so deeply engaged in perusing a ponderous black folio, that she laid her hand on his shoulder without his perceiving it; but after several times repeating his name, accompanying the sound with a gentle motion of her hand on his shoulder, such as one uses to rouse another from a deep sleep, she at last succeeded in making him comprehend the nature of her information, and in persuading him to accompany her to the supper-room.

It was truly a beautiful sight to see Ellen engaged in administering the rites of hospitality to her venerable friends; and it was pleasant to observe the address with which she introduced and assisted to sustain such topics of conversation as she thought would interest both; sometimes relieving the gravity of discussion by a playful observation; sometimes, when Mr. Walton seemed about to fall into a prosaic dissertation, dexterously availing herself of some idea suggested by his conversation, to lead his attention to another subject. Mr. Morton smiled internally, now at the address with which Ellen practiced this innocent artifice, now at the child-like simplicity with which Mr. Walton yielded to the impulse she gave conversation, without once suspecting her motive for changing its direction.

They were engaged in deep discussion, when they were interrupted by a rap at the door, and a servant entered with a note dispatched by Mr. Clifford to Mr. Morton, which had been carried first to the Parsonage, and from thence to Woodbourne, informing him that Mr. Stanly, the sick neighbor that Mr. Clifford had gone that evening to visit, was scarcely expected to survive the night, and requesting him, in the name of the sufferer, to come immediately, as he wished much to see him. Mr. Morton prepared instantly to obey the summons, but Ellen would not permit

him to depart until she had carefully enveloped his neck in various handkerchiefs, to guard him against the piercing air of an unusually cold December night, and hastily written a few pencil lines to her father, to beg that he would not expose himself to the night air on her account, as she should be quite safe and contented with Mr. Walton.

When she had finished her labors of love, which were dispatched before the horse could be saddled and brought to the door, Mr. Morton shook her hand affectionately, saying, "May God reward your kind heart, my child!" Ellen's eyes filled with tears at the tender solemnity of tone with which these few words were uttered, and, as she closed the door, she drew her chair near the fire, and fell into a profound and somewhat sad reverie.

She had persuaded Mr. Walton to resume the studies which had been interrupted by the summons to supper, assuring him she should not feel at all lonesome, as she could always find occupation and amusement in her books and music. Mr. Walton thought this so reasonable and so natural a state of mind, that he left her without farther persuasion, to betake himself with renewed diligence to the perusal of his ponderous black folio. The hollow blasts of wind without, the deep silence and solitude within, the images of death which were brought so forcibly and sadly to her mind, by the summons Mr. Morton had just received, inspired deep, sad, and solemn musings on life and human destiny. Ellen thought over the past, from the evening she received her mother's last kiss, alas, how unconsciously that it was the last! to the present time; and in this review the truth of Mr. Morton's remarks recurred forcibly and somewhat painfully to her mind, though she felt that there was scarcely any particular instance in which she had sacrificed her feelings to those of her friends, that she could wish recalled. She was roused from this train of thought, by the gentle opening of the door, and started with surprise to see Edgar Clifford enter.

"What is the matter?" said Ellen, with a tone of alarm, hastily rising to meet him.

"Is there any thing so alarming in my appearance?" said

Edgar, with one of those bright smiles, which irresistibly chased away apprehension, and gently taking her hand.

"Oh, no," said Ellen, with an answering smile, "but this desperately cold, dark night, I thought nothing but some powerful motive could have induced you to brave; indeed, it was very imprudent, in your state of health, too."

"Only the powerful motive of getting back home," said Edgar, with an accent full of meaning in the words, and a glance so full of tenderness at Ellen, that she felt the color rise to her cheek, though she immediately reproached herself with folly for attaching any importance to such a trifle, particularly when he added, in a gayer tone: "The truth is, I am, I dare say, fastidious in my tastes; but those Woodvilles and Mr. Granville, though they might be called by the world agreeable people, bored me terribly, and I wished myself a thousand times back again at Woodbourne, with my uncle and yourself. But you look feverish to-night, Ellen, you have not, I hope, been more indisposed than when we left you?"

"My indisposition is trifling," said Ellen, "scarcely worth a thought."

"Because it is yours: but were it Sophia's, or William's, or, perhaps, even mine, it would require the utmost care and attention: it was but a few minutes ago you reproved my imprudence in coming out on such a night as this. It is true, in England, I should have thought a ride of several miles in a severe December night quite an undertaking; but in Virginia such a consideration would doubtless be deemed shameful effeminacy, or something even more odious—what is called in common parlance, giving one's self high airs."

"Yet as you never were inured to hardship or fatigue, I would not advise you to emulate our young men in this respect, until your health is entirely re-established; meantime, we will try as much as possible to prevent your feeling the want of comforts to which you have been accustomed at home, instead of encouraging you to unnecessary and dangerous exposure."

"Oh, I had almost forgotten that I was not at home, every thing seems so natural to me; not that I mean the state of things

here resembles that to which I have been accustomed, but on that very account I like it better ; it accords with my nature, though not with my former habits. Should I hereafter be any thing great or good, to your influence I shall ascribe all that may be noble or virtuous in my future conduct, for you first have taught me to believe in the possible existence of pure, disinterested virtue."

These words were uttered in a tone of sad and deep feeling. He watched the **surprise** and concern which were expressed in Ellen's countenance at this avowal, and the slight shudder which passed over her frame as she replied : " Surely, Edgar, you are not serious in saying you doubt the existence of virtue ; can you cherish so gloomy, so sacrilegious an idea ? or perhaps I did not hear you rightly."

" My dear cousin, could you know all the past circumstances of my life, could you know how little reason I have had to believe in virtue, you would not judge me so harshly, but rather pity my incredulity."

" Indeed I do already pity most truly such a state of mind, but surely your father, your—" Ellen paused, as if doubtful how she should finish the sentence ; when Edgar, replying rather to her thoughts than to her words, said :

" I know what you would say : but my father entertains the same doubts ; and my mother occupied with other things, naturally, too delicate in her health, and much separated from us, had neither inclination nor opportunity to make impressions on the minds of her children, on moral or religious subjects. And, though you have awakened my mind to new views, still, I must confess, that I entertain them with doubt and fear, dreading the time when the bright fabric which my fancy has raised shall be dissolved, and I shall be left in deeper and more impenetrable gloom. Yet, **this confession** is for you alone Ellen ; for though all are kind, yet you alone have that indulgence which can pity while it blames—which can heal the wounds of the heart, and dispel the errors of the mind, without the aid of caustic or knife, by the balm of kindness and the pure light of truth."

He looked earnestly at Ellen, as he pronounced these words ;

but no gleam of pleasure, no expression of gratified vanity shone in that dark eye, which reflected every emotion of her guileless soul. She sighed as if involuntarily, and after a pause, replied : " You grieve me, Edgar, by ascribing to me, an influence which I am conscious you are mistaken in thinking I possess over your mind ; and even could I believe that I could exercise such power, the responsibility would rather alarm than gratify me. How could I, so imperfect, so weak, so full of errors, so often led away by feeling, presume to guide and enlighten a mind naturally so much more powerful than my own—you could not fail soon to perceive my errors and inconsistencies ; and might, perhaps, be led to conclude, that there was indeed no reality in the principles by which I professed to be guided. It is God only, who can heal the deep wounds of the heart. It is God only, who can shed the pure light of truth on the darkened soul."

These words were uttered with so much unaffected feeling and earnest simplicity of manner, that they awakened an emotion in Edgar Clifford's heart of entire confidence in her sincerity, and an admiration of that single-mindedness and nobleness of soul, which rose superior to every emotion of personal vanity, that he had never before experienced. He felt that the usual style of personal compliment would be more than useless addressed to her, and simply replied : " But does not God use human means to purify our hearts, to enlighten our minds ? if indeed he condescends to notice miserable and ephemeral beings, such as man, which I have scarcely the presumption to believe. But should this hope, which has sometimes lately crossed my mind, be light from heaven, and not an ignis fatuus of fancy, I feel, Ellen, that you must be the instrument selected by Providence to reclaim me from error ; for it is from your words, from your conduct, alone that the only light, the only hope, which has ever dawned on my soul, feeble though it is, on the great subject of religion, has been derived. But I fear that I have estimated even your indulgence, even your liberality too highly ; and, but that I do not wish to deceive you, even to gain your approbation, I should repent the candor which has changed me from an object of kindness, perhaps, too, of some little interest, to one almost of horror,

in your eyes—a sort of Paria, and outcast in creation. You can not forgive me, Ellen, for what has been rather my misfortune than my fault.”

“Forgive you !” repeated Ellen. “Oh, Edgar, what an expression ! What is my forgiveness on a subject so awful as this, in the vastness and solemnity of which all human considerations are lost ? It is not my forgiveness that can avail you any thing ; but seek rather that of the Creator whom you have neglected and disbelieved, not only by your misfortune, but your fault, for the light of truth is denied to none who earnestly endeavor to find it. But do not suppose, for an instant, that my kindness or interest is diminished for you on account of these unhappy errors. No, I should be too happy could any effort of mine assist in removing them, if—”

“Only promise me, Ellen, that you will not like me less for my sincerity—that you will not despise me for entertaining opinions, which, if they are erroneous, have made me sufficiently unhappy, and which may, perhaps, have been the result of my education and associates. Only promise, however you may disapprove—and I will submit to any reproof, however harsh from you—that you will still be my friend.”

“I do promise, under all circumstances, to be your friend !” said Ellen, extending her hand, which Edgar held silently in his own for a minute, then said, in a low voice : “I shall never forget this promise ; but you look as if you required rest, and I have been selfish, as usual, in considering only my own gratification, by prolonging this conversation. Good-night, Ellen, I will not detain you longer !”

CHAPTER XIV.

C'était une personne froide, digne, silencieuse mais qui avait d'ailleurs quelque chose de si positif dans l'expression de sa physionomie, et dans ses discours, qu'il paraissait impossible de lui faire entendre, ni une idée nouvelle, ni seulement une parole à laquelle son esprit ne fût pas accoutumé.

MAD. DE STAEL.—*Corinne*.

ELLEN retired to her own apartment, but it was long before her mind was sufficiently composed to enable her to sleep. Edgar's conversation had deeply pained, yet, greatly interested her ; and, with the blame which her clear and pure moral judgment compelled her to award him, was mingled an unutterably strong emotion of pity, and a hope, which she feared it was almost presumptuous to indulge : that through her instrumentality, he might be led to see and embrace the truth. She thought, with talents such as his, with a heart so replete with every tender and noble feeling, as she supposed his to be—though, it is true, the proofs on this head would not have been conclusive to most minds—that could the hopeless gloom of infidelity be dispelled, there was nothing too great or too good to be hoped from him. A thousand new and conflicting feelings, in which pain and pleasure were strangely blended, arose in her heart. Did she, indeed, possess so much power over such a mind and heart as Edgar Clifford's, a power of which she had never dreamed of the possibility of possessing ? It appeared to her almost incredible ; for no one ever was more unaffectedly, more sincerely humble than Ellen. But why should Edgar Clifford express sentiments toward her which he did not feel, and with looks and tones, which none could see and hear and believe to be feigned ? Yet, though Ellen was deeply touched at these proofs of his attachment and confidence, she did not once ascribe them to love ; for nothing could have appeared to her mind more improbable, than that the son of Lord Fitz-Claire, who she had heard was an

ambitious man, and who she knew had doubtless educated his son to look forward to returning, and forming a brilliant alliance among the most distinguished for rank and fashion, in the highest circles in London, should fall in love with a simple country girl, reared in a colony which she knew the English considered as only half civilized. Though she could not help perceiving the decided preference he felt for her; yet she attributed it only to friendship, founded partly on the congeniality of their literary tastes and pursuits, partly on the care she had taken not to offend his prejudices, and to comply with certain fastidious tastes and peculiarities of humor which she only had observed.

There was only one individual that mingled intimately in the family circle who regarded Edgar Clifford with no partial eye, and who never relaxed her manner of cold and obstinate reserve toward him—Mrs. Herbert. She soon conceived an unfavorable opinion of his principles, from some light speech on a religious subject, which she overheard him address in a low tone to some one present. Her opinions of character were never influenced by imagination; she never fancied qualities to exist of which she perceived no evidence.

“ A primrose by the river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him;
And it was nothing more.”

And for this reason she was often commended by others, and obtained, too, her own approbation, for strong, practical good sense, because all she saw or heard must be admitted as undeniable truths, and no one could question or disprove the truth of any particular fact she ever mentioned. And yet, in forming an estimate of character, she erred, no less from the defect of imagination, than others from its excess; for nothing is more necessary to the difficult study of the human heart than the power of combination, the faculty of divining the unseen by what is seen, and that fertility of thought and vividness of feeling, which gives to the possessor a hidden key to the ideas and emotions of others, whereby he deciphers what to common observers would be unintelligible—possessed *only by the imaginative*.

It is true, imagination, misdirected or indulged to excess, may lead to misery, to madness, to death itself; but it is no less a light from heaven, given to shed its radiance over the gloomy paths of life, rejoicing our hearts with its brightness, and guiding us aright, if we place but the celestial torch in the steady hand of reason.

Mrs. Herbert's opinions were not only raised on narrow premises, but, once formed, they were indestructible as a house built on a rock; and no one had ever known her to be guilty of the weakness of pronouncing those three humiliating little words, "I was wrong." Edgar Clifford possessed naturally a quick discernment, rendered more acute by constant habits of intercourse with the world from his childhood, for he had been sent when very young to a public school, which is, in many respects, analogous to being thrown upon the world. He therefore immediately perceived Mrs. Herbert's dislike or disapprobation—he knew not which; for the effects produced by these sentiments on conduct were always the same with her; and he was totally at a loss to what to attribute the existence of either of these feelings toward himself. It was rare, very rare, for him to seek unsuccessfully to please—indeed he could scarcely recall an instance during his whole life of failing to win the admiration of others when he had sought to gain it in any extraordinary degree.

Mrs. Herbert he regarded as a cold, haughty, narrow-minded bigot; and his natural taste would have inclined him to avoid rather than seek any intercourse with a character so uncongenial to his own, had not her obstinate reserve and almost haughty indifference piqued his pride, and roused that perversity of feeling which makes us desire whatever we have not; though this is only one of the many forms in which that strange emotion manifests itself, which is in some natures a strong, and even a ruling principle. Her unchanging look of cold and fixed disapprobation was scarcely less distasteful to him than Mordecai's sitting at the king's gate was to Haman; and he determined, if possible, to triumph over her dislike, and win her admiration; but, alas! he little thought what a task he had undertaken!

Mrs. Herbert had a young and lovely family, consisting of two

boys, Charles and Richard, and a girl, who was an infant, to whom she was strongly, if not tenderly, attached—strongly, perhaps, best describes the nature of that affection which is completely under the control of rules ; and though capable of the most difficult exertions, is incapable of that affectionate sympathy which makes the sorrows, the joys, the feelings of others completely its own. Edgar Clifford was naturally fond of children, and he sought to soften the mother's heart by attention to them. But even on this point he found that heart invulnerable ; and his pride was wounded at his own condescension at having made the attempt, rather than at its failure.

"C'est en vain qu'on se dit : tel homme n'est pas digne de me juger, telle femme n'est pas capable de me comprendre. Le visage humain exerce un grand pouvoir sur le cœur humain, et quand vous lisez sur ce visage une disapprobation secrète elle vous inquiète toujours en dépit de vous même ; enfin le cercle qui vous environne finit toujours par cacher de vous le reste du monde."

Edgar felt neither admiration nor regard for Mrs. Herbert ; and, had he met her in the world, would, probably, scarcely have bestowed a thought on her ; but in this narrow circle each individual was of importance, and he felt chagrined, in spite of himself, at her cold and disapproving manner. Ellen had perceived Mrs. Herbert's manner toward him, almost as quickly as himself, and it caused even more pain to her than vexation to him ; for coldness and unkindness, even to indifferent persons, was abhorrent to the overflowing love and gentleness of her heart. But when manifested toward one who was not only acquiring fresh claims to her pity and interest, but to whom she felt bound by the ties of relationship and the sacred duties of hospitality, it was far more painful than if it had been shown toward herself. Ellen was in the habit rather of repressing the expression of her feelings ; but the attentive observer might read them in the changeful expression of her eye, in the varying color of her cheek, and interpret the modulation of tones which truly expressed every emotion of her heart. Superficial observers always mistook her real character, while by those of deeper observation

it might be easily and truly read—but too truly ; for there are secrets in the human heart with which few are pure and noble enough to be trusted ; and the time may come when such discoveries may prove as fatal to the peace of those concerned, as the confession extorted by the arts of Delilah proved to Samson.

Edgar Clifford often forgot his own pique at Mrs. Herbert's dislike, in gratification at observing the pain it gave Ellen, and the various little ways by which she tried to divert his attention from any ungracious speech, or cold return to offered civility ; nor did those instances of unkindness ever fail to increase the kindness and consideration of her own manner toward him. He often thanked her by a look or a tone, which expressed more than words could have done ; but he never uttered the slightest intimation of his consciousness of Mrs. Herbert's feelings toward him. Ellen thanked him in her heart for this delicate forbearance, for it would have been painful and embarrassing to her to have admitted the fact ; and yet her religious observance of the truth would not have permitted her to deny it.

Edgar Clifford seemed to fall with much ease and facility into the habits and domestic arrangements of his uncle's family ; indeed he scarcely ever alluded to ever having been accustomed to any other mode of life ; and if conversation ever turned on his former habits, and the scenes of gayety in which he had once mingled, in the first city in the world, he would skillfully change the theme as soon as politeness warranted. That quickness of observation which discerns, as if by intuition, what is displeasing, and that delicacy and noble species of pride which avoids such subjects, partly from the fear of giving pain, partly from a refined generosity, that scorns to extort secrets of the heart which the possessor would gladly withhold, even though it may be done in the strictest accordance with the rules of politeness, is nowhere to be found in greater perfection than in Old Virginia : perhaps once, even in a greater degree than at present, from causes on which it might be invidious to dwell. The Virginians have too much pride, too much delicacy, and have always been too much occupied with those important concerns of life which have a tendency to make men grave and thoughtful, to cultivate con-

versation as a fine art, as Madame de Staël finely expresses the manner in which the Parisians converse ; but perhaps there are no people in the world among whom fewer impertinences are committed, fewer wounds are inflicted on the heart by curiosity, insensibility, or want of delicacy ; and no country where politeness is extended, and favors bestowed on strangers, with warmer, more unostentatious, and yet more dignified liberality.

Edgar Clifford soon perceived that there was no danger of his having any disagreeable subject of conversation obtruded upon him except by Mrs. Herbert, whom he now looked upon in the light of an enemy, though his demeanor was always marked toward her by that easy yet guarded civility, which makes aggression almost impossible. Mr. Clifford frequently expressed to his children, with affectionate pleasure, his gratification that Edgar had become completely one of them, though he thought it a little strange that he should not converse oftener about his own family, but ascribed it to one of those strange vagaries of feeling, which people satisfy themselves to account for, by saying, "It is such a person's way."

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CHAPTER XV.

Such were the days which Seged Emperor of Ethiopia had appropriated to a short respiration from the fatigues of war and the cares of government. This narrative he has bequeathed to future generations, that no man hereafter shall presume to say, "This day shall be a day of happiness."
Rasselas.

SOME weeks passed away and brought even in this small lapse of time, many things to a close, among which was the month of January—the last day of which was notable to the inhabitants of Woodbourne, from its being the birthday of Mr. Granville. It had always been his custom to invite the inmates of Woodbourne and Herbert Lodge to spend this day with him; and it would have been considered a violation not only of politeness but of friendship, to have pleaded any thing short of a fractured limb as an excuse for not complying with the invitation. On such occasions, the neighbors were frequently summoned for thirty miles around, to partake of a dinner which would have fed a regiment; and the day generally concluded with a dance, in which the dancers made up in mirth what was wanting in elegance, or knowledge of the Parisian steps and figures. The Scotch reel, the cotillion, or perchance the stately minuet, performed by the elite of the dancers, were the utmost exertions of the art ventured on by the performers. Waltzes, shawl-dances, and gallopades were things unknown; and would have been known only to have been eschewed and abhorred, as utter violations of the modesty of character, which so much distinguished the ladies of Virginia, that it was considered as much a thing of course that a lady should possess at least the appearance of this quality, as that she should have a nose on her face. The music was generally performed at these private parties by some gentleman who was kind enough to exert his musical skill on the violin, from the benevolent wish of contributing to the amuse-

ment of others, who, of course, judged of the performance in the like spirit of kindness ; or it was furnished by some negro, who performed a few tunes on the violin by ear, with some natural spirit and feeling, if not with much skill or accuracy. Few affected fastidiousness on these occasions ; and a good-humored wish to please and be pleased, supplied all deficiencies in elegance ; while native refinement and delicacy prevented any thing that a person of taste or feeling would have pronounced vulgar in sentiment or conduct.

It was on the morning of the 31st of January. Ellen was standing in the breakfast-room, reading Olivia's note of invitation to spend the day at Windsor—for so Mr. Granville had designated his residence, as he loved that every thing around him should awaken his English associations. Though the attendance of the Woodbourne family was considered as a matter of course, still Mr. Granville was one who upon no occasion dispensed with forms. On this day the company at Windsor would not be as numerous as usual, as his strength was not quite re-established since a recent fit of the gout. There was a line written at the bottom of the note which had afterward been carefully erased, but not so carefully as to prevent Ellen from discovering William's name ; from which she readily guessed the purport of the line. As William's mind had become more absorbed in the state of the country and political plans, his visits had become less frequent to Windsor ; and as the disturbance of the colonies, and various political questions arising from the present state of things at that time, came to be more frequent subjects of debate, the strong reasoning powers and fervid eloquence of William Clifford, began to excite attention and admiration, and the eyes of the republican party turned upon him as a young man from whom much was to be hoped. All these things greatly excited the displeasure, and, to speak the truth, wounded, likewise, the affections of Mr. Granville. He felt offended that William should thus act and think in direct opposition to his views and sentiments ; and could not help feeling his course as a violation of the respect due to himself. William Clifford was the only person he had ever seen whom he thought an equal match for Olivia ; and though

he had too much pride to have taken the least step to have promoted his daughter's union with a prince, such an event would have given him heart-felt pleasure ; his mortification was therefore proportional, as he began to suspect that the secret and darling wish of his heart could never be realized.

"What are you poring over so intently ? One might almost suppose it a love letter," said Edgar Clifford, who stood beside Ellen, before she perceived that he had entered the room.

"It is a letter of love at least," said Ellen, smiling ; "and equally concerns us all. This is Mr. Granville's birthday, and it has always been considered an indispensable observance that we should spend it with him ; and this note contains a pressing and particular invitation to each of the inmates of Woodbourne and Herbert Cottage to dine at Windsor to-day."

"Is it then absolutely necessary that we ~~should~~ all go ? You know I have submitted myself implicitly to ~~your~~ guidance."

"~~A~~bsolutely ; and I hope you will not find it a disagreeable necessity."

"~~Why~~, to tell the truth, I had much rather stay quietly at home, and finish the Spanish play we began yesterday ; but if it must perforce be done, I shall yield with the best grace imaginable. But I hope there will not be a large company."

Ellen smiled, and replied : "It is somewhat strange that you, who have been accustomed to mingling in crowds from your childhood, should feel such an aversion to them."

"Yes, Ellen, but strange things do sometimes happen ; and strange changes have come over me of late, such as I can hardly understand myself."

As Edgar Clifford uttered these words, he looked with an earnest and tender melancholy in Ellen's face, which made the color rise to her cheek, but the thoughts and feelings that his look and manner awakened, were almost as transient as the blush that dyed her cheek ; and she thought immediately afterward the speech was not intended to have any particular reference to herself.

The entrance of the other members of the family diverted Ellen's thoughts into other channels, but the face which she most wished to see on this occasion was missing from the family group.

"Do you know what has become of William?" said Ellen, with an anxious tone, and directing a general glance of inquiry on all around.

Her father and Sophia both replied in the negative.

"He rode Wildfire away about an hour ago, Miss Ellen," said John, who was in attendance.

"Do you know where he has gone?" inquired Ellen, eagerly. It is very rare indeed that a simple answer to a direct question is ever obtained from a negro; with or without cause, they conceal their most indifferent actions, and often act toward their masters, in this respect, on the principle of "doing as they would be done by."

John, in accordance with this rule of action, muttered that he did not know rightly; and watched his opportunity of slipping a small piece of paper mysteriously into Ellen's hand, containing a few lines from William Clifford. He stated in this note that he had just received a few lines from Dudley, an old college friend: he was attached to this young man, not only by those endearing reminiscences which belong to one of the happiest portions of a young man's existence, but by a similarity in their political views, and the same generous and disinterested, though not equally ardent patriotism. Dudley's letter contained an urgent request, he said, that he should come to him immediately, as Mr. Rogers, from Boston, was with him, and would leave him on the following morning, and he thought it of much importance that they should have some personal communication. Why it was important, William said, he had no leisure to explain, but hoped Ellen would resume her old office of advocate in his behalf, and endeavor to persuade Mr. Granville that nothing but an indispensable engagement could have prevented his attendance, though of course it would be better not to mention the nature of the engagement. He feared, however, that no excuse could appease Mr. Granville, and therefore chiefly wished her to exert her eloquence to convince Olivia that his absence was not the result of willful neglect or unkindness; and, if possible, he would be at Windsor before the festivities of the day were entirely closed.

Ellen communicated the contents of this opistle to no one but

her father, who listened with a thoughtful and anxious countenance, and almost without reply.

"My dear father," said Ellen, in a faltering tone, "there are times when I fear William is plunging into a course alike perilous to his happiness and safety."

"There are times, my love," replied Mr. Clifford, in a sad yet gentle tone, "when honor and patriotism require that safety, that happiness, and even the happiness of those dearer than ourselves, should be periled; but I humbly trust that we have not fallen on these evil days, and that God will avert the storm which seems gathering over our heads. But you look pale and deeply moved. You must try, Ellen, whatever may come, to arm yourself with that noble fortitude, which sustains not only our own souls, but those of our friends in the hour of trial, and which so greatly distinguished her whom we both so much loved."

Mr. Clifford's voice faltered, and he quitted the room to conceal and subdue his emotions. It was almost the first time Ellen had ever heard him mention her mother, and it affected her deeply. But there was little time on this day for the indulgence of thought, whether sad or pleasing, for now the bustle and business of the day had fully commenced; and as many of the accommodations and appliances which can be found only in an old and highly-civilized country were wanting, on such occasions as these, invention and ingenuity were taxed to furnish expedients and supply deficiencies. The chariot must make two trips to convey all the inmates of Woodbourne and Herbert Cottage, as Mr. Granville insisted the boys should not be left at home, and Captain Herbert was so much of an invalid that he never rode on horseback but in fine weather. Then various little deficiencies in dress must be repaired or concealed, as well as the circumstances would permit; and, finally, Ellen packed up a few articles of plate, such as she thought Olivia might find necessary for her table service on a gala day—for on such occasions these loans were not only usual, but almost indispensable, even among the wealthiest planters.

"Why should the labors of Hercules ever be spoken of, when the toils of a Virginia lady in the eighteenth century so far transcend them all?" said Edgar Clifford, as he offered his arm to Ellen,

as she had completed her last preparation, to conduct her to the chariot. "I marvel at your patience, and pity your fatigues more than I can express."

"One gets used to every thing," replied Ellen, laughing; "and then too there are some advantages to be drawn even from the multiplicity and variety of our employments."

"I grant that, like the bee, you can draw honey even from poison; but even your philosophy can not disguise from me that you have exerted yourself beyond your strength."

"Oh, I shall soon recover my fatigue, and forget that I ever felt it, in the pleasure of seeing Olivia, if William was only with us. But—"

Here Ellen stopped short, in some embarrassment, for she was about to betray more of her secret thoughts than she judged either prudent or delicate; and Edgar, though internally smiling at her artlessness, with refined good breeding affected to be occupied in admiring the noble grays, who stood pawing the ground with impatience.

At length they were all safely deposited in the great drawing-room at Windsor, and Edgar enjoyed the air of neatness and comfort that reigned in the apartment, which he mentally compared with sitting-rooms usually found in the country houses of the English gentry. Mr. Granville received his guests with much cordiality and kindness, but an air of disappointment was visible in his countenance as he greeted the last comers from Woodbourne. Olivia, too, cast an inquiring glance at Ellen, as if to ask with her eyes what she was too proud to utter with her lips.

Ellen turned toward Mr. Granville, and, with increased color and some embarrassment, began to excuse William's absence, when he interrupted her hastily, by saying:

"I am quite sure, Ellen, it is not your fault that he has not graced our poor feast with his presence; but if he has pleasanter and more important avocations, than attending the birthday of an infirm and useless old man, far be it from me to wish to interfere with them."

"You know, my dear Mr. Granville," said Ellen, in a low, sweet tone of expostulation, intended for his ear alone, "that I never

deal in idle or false compliment, so you can not refuse to believe me when I assure you, that William was much disappointed at being absent on an occasion which we always have, and always shall consider worthy of celebration, at least by your most intimate friends; and nothing but an indispensable engagement—”

“May I ask of what nature?” said Mr. Granville, somewhat appeased by the kind and gentle sincerity of Ellen’s manner.

Ellen colored deeply, and replied with some hesitation, that she did not fully understand the nature of the engagement.

The cloud darkened again on Mr. Granville’s brow. “Nature never designed you for an equivocator, Ellen; but it is useless to say more of what can not be helped, though I foresee—”

Here he was interrupted by the entrance of new guests, greatly to Ellen’s relief; but she observed that, notwithstanding the assiduity with which he performed all the duties of hospitality—and many and various were the duties of this nature that devolved on him—a cloud still hung on his brow, and she heard him answer the doleful complaints of a valetudinarian with a forced air of cheerfulness, and a congratulation on his returning health, and make inquiries of other guests about their families, then abruptly changing his theme, without waiting for their answers. Olivia concealed her mortification and disappointment much more skillfully, though Ellen observed something very like a tear glisten in her eye, as some allusion was made to the last 31st of January; and Miss Lesley remarked that it had been one of the happiest days she had ever spent, and among other pleasant things, she remembered Mr. Clifford’s conversation as particularly animated and interesting. Olivia averted her face, and entered into conversation with the person next her, in so light and playful a strain, that none could have suspected how little the gayety of her heart corresponded with her words and manner. It is true, toward the close of the evening, fits of abstraction came on her; any noise in the passage startled her, and a glance toward the door every now and then, showed Ellen plainly what was passing in the mind of her friend.

But the evening passed away, and William Clifford did not make his appearance: and this circumstance caused Ellen almost

as strong a sensation of disappointment as it did Olivia. For the first time in her life she was pleased when the 31st of January fairly closed. Some of the most youthful and gayest part of the company remained all night to prolong the pleasure of dancing ; Sophia was one of the number ; but Ellen preferred accompanying her father home, and a long-drawn sigh relieved her oppressed feelings, as she seated herself in the carriage to return to Woodbourne. Edgar Clifford pled indisposition as an excuse for returning likewise, and his uncle insisted on his taking a seat in the chariot with Ellen, that he might not be exposed to the piercing night air, while he preferred himself a ride on horseback. Edgar seemed constantly thrown, whether by accident, or by any effort of his own, on Ellen's care for sympathy and kindness, and that sort of assistance which it is more endearing to render, even, than to receive. Sometimes the variations of health, produced by a consumptive tendency of constitution, demanded her attention and kindness ; sometimes he was out of spirits, and sought amusement in her society ; which, he showed plainly to her, and sometimes intimated when they were **alone**, possessed attractions for him greatly superior to that of any **other** member of the family ; and sometimes he would converse in a serious strain, speak of the gloomy doubts which darkened his mind and often oppressed his heart, and appear to seek, in conversation with her, light and consolation.

Thus, from day to day, Ellen's mind became more and more occupied with her fascinating cousin ; his influence grew stronger, and yet the kind of intercourse which subsisted between them appeared to arise so naturally, and so necessarily almost, that no one thought it any thing extraordinary. Mrs. Herbert, indeed, disapproved, though she did not for a moment imagine the possibility that the peace of Ellen Clifford's heart could be endangered by one in whom she saw so much to disapprove, and who would manifestly be so unsuitable to her.

CHAPTER XVI.

L'amour d'Oswald pour Corinne avait modifié toute sa manière de sentir :
mais l'amour n'efface jamais entièrement le caractère.

MAD. DE STAEL.—*Corinne.*

"WELL, I am glad we have no more birthdays to celebrate, and are to have a quiet day at home," said Edgar Clifford, as he drew his chair to the breakfast-table on the following morning.

"Why, one would scarcely imagine," said Mr. Clifford, with a smile, "that at your time of life, and brought up in scenes of fashion and gayety, it should be a subject of rejoicing that you exchange an occasion of festivity for a quiet, hum-drum day at home."

"Quiet, but not hum-drum, if you please."

"Well, choose your own manner of expressing it, but quiet is not exactly the sort of enjoyment which seems most natural to a young man. At your age, my heart would leap at the sound of a violin, or at the sight of dancers; society and amusements, however simple, produced an exhilarating effect on my spirits, and a quiet day at home would have been the very last thing I should ever have thought of wishing for."

Edgar smiled as he said, "I fear I can not clear myself of the charge of degeneracy, for it is most certain were it in my power to recall yesterday, with all its amusements, I would not exert it."

"It is true, one accustomed to the splendid gayeties of London, where rank, beauty, talent, and fashion unite their attractions, and where immense wealth, and the advantages attendant on a highly civilized state of society, give the power of realizing the wonders of Eastern tales, would be struck with many deficiencies and incongruities in our simple entertainments; and would, perhaps, miss, painfully, the polish of manner, the brilliancy of wit, the light and graceful playfulness, which nothing can bestow on

society but the extensive and varied intercourse, which can only take place in a great city ; yet to me the simple kindness of our manners, the charm of all charms—Nature—outweighs them all.”

“ I am sorry, my dear uncle, you have yet to learn that I am a citizen of the world. I am wedded to no place, and a slave to no conventional forms ; and so far from regretting the gayeties or luxuries of London, my mind is refreshed with the newness of all around me, the greater the novelty, the stronger the charm to me, which may, perhaps, account for my now preferring home to all other places. I have never before known the pleasures of quiet and retirement.”

An almost imperceptible glance at Ellen, told him that the color deepened on her cheek, and her eyes shone with the brilliancy of pleasurable emotion at this assertion. He had learned enough of Ellen's heart to know that this pleasure might arise from the interest she felt in his moral improvement ; but he thought it likewise not improbable that she felt a secret exultation at this change of taste, as affording a strong proof of the fascinating influence of her society. And from whatever source her emotion proceeded, it showed, at least, that he possessed power over her feelings.

Mr. Clifford smiled, as he replied, “ It is very fortunate that your change of tastes should be so well adapted to the circumstances in which you are placed ; and I hope, before the novelty has worn off, you will learn to love home for its own sake.”

“ Why, to say the truth,” said Edgar, laughing, “ I have experienced so many transformations, I should not wonder at any change that was to pass over me, nor would I be presumptuous enough to guess what manner of man I shall be six months from this time.”

When breakfast was over, Edgar proposed to Ellen that they should resume their Spanish studies—there was a difficult passage in the last lesson he had not explained, as they had been interrupted before the lesson was concluded. The explanation led to observations on other Spanish poetry—from poetry the transition is easy to sentiment, and from general to particular sentiment ; and Edgar insensibly led the conversation to his own

feelings and character. He gave many vivid sketches of his past life, and placed in so striking a light, the temptations to which he had been exposed, that Ellen listened with the liveliest interest, the purest compassion, and felt inspired with the strongest desire that a mind so brilliant, a heart with such fearful capacities for good or evil, should be reclaimed from error, and elevated to the glorious destination for which nature seemed to have designed them. There was so much in Edgar Clifford's education and circumstances to extenuate, if not excuse his errors, that Ellen thought there was every thing to hope for the improvement of his character, and the establishment of right principles. Nor could she help being touched and gratified, we will not say, flattered, for, if ever human heart was free from vanity, it was hers, at the eagerness and interest with which he listened to her advice, and besought her assistance in his search for truth, and plans of reformation.

Hour after hour passed by unheeded, and the interesting conversation was prolonged, until they were interrupted by the entrance of Sophia, who had just returned from Windsor, unaccompanied, as usual, however, by Olivia.

"I thought I should find you two here," she said, laughing; "really, I think you should take Mr. Walton to form a trio; you will scarcely find any one else who would spend three or four hours, poring over these old black folios; I don't know which to admire most, your patience, as a scholar, Ellen, or my cousin's, as a teacher?"

Ellen colored slightly, as she replied, "We generally admire most what we know least about; and, therefore, I will not tell you what our toils and progress have been this morning."

"The time has passed off, to me, at least, rapidly, though, I fear, not so much so to your sister; but, you know, her patience is inexhaustible."

"And, therefore, the demands on it are unceasing," said Sophia; "for my part, I would not for the world have it supposed that I am patient."

"I have never offended you so far, as to imagine it," said Edgar, smiling.

"But I am not particularly impatient," said Sophia; "I hope you do not mean to make such an insinuation?"

"Only a happy mixture of patience and impatience—a strange and charming compound, in which the most opposite qualities are so blended, it is impossible to say which predominates."

"I dare say, you are laughing at me; however, I will watch my opportunity for revenge, should this be the case, which I more than half suspect, from the smile lurking in your eyes, which are not quite so obedient as your lips."

"I meant neither compliment nor ridicule, but simple truth—how could you suspect me?"

"To tell the truth," said Sophia, with a bright smile of restored good-humor, "I scarcely know what to make of you; and, as aunt Herbert says, never know whether you are in jest or earnest; but I am willing always to lean to the most favorable construction, and have a marvelous digestion for compliments."

"How is Mr. Granville this morning?" asked Ellen, who was fearful lest more of Mrs. Herbert's sayings might be repeated.

"Oh, better in health, but worse in humor; I left him scolding poor Olivia, and when I begged him to let her come home with me, he gave me a flat refusal; indeed, you are the only person in favor with him at present, in token whereof he has sent you a beautiful ruby brooch, with which, by your leave, I shall sometimes take the liberty of adorning my own fair self."

"It was very kind and good of him to think of me," said Ellen, "and I prize it highly as a token of his regard."

"But have you no curiosity to see this beautiful ornament?" said Edgar, smiling; "or do you prize Mr. Granville's love above rubies?"

"Very far above them; but let us see the brooch, Sophia, and we shall know better how to estimate their comparative value."

"Oh," said Sophia, "do you keep the love, and I will keep the rubies; will not this be a fair distribution, as we shall then both have what we prefer?" So saying, she drew from her pocket—for these were the days of pockets—a small case, and opening it, displayed to view a brooch of exquisite workmanship, set with splendid rubies.

"Ellen looks at it as composedly as if it were a pebble," said Sophia. "Does she deserve it?"

"She would grace it, if she does not deserve it," said Edgar; "it is indeed a beautiful ornament," examining it more closely, "and exactly resembles, in setting and workmanship, a brooch I have often seen my mother wear."

Ellen looked at it more closely as he said this; and Sophia said, "Pray, tell us what sort of looking lady is your mother?"

"Why, it is very difficult, indeed impossible, to give an accurate idea of a face from description; who can describe the perfume of the rose, or the music of the *Æolian* harp? And it is equally hopeless to attempt to convey by words any idea of the peculiar expression which characterizes every individual, distinguishing every human being from all others by marks equally distinguishable and undefinable. But if you mean the color of her eyes and hair, her height, complexion, &c., I can gratify your curiosity; and yet you will not have the slightest idea of her appearance."

"Ah, leave that to me; she has black eyes of course, as she is a Spanish lady."

"Large, bright, and black."

"Soft or piercing?"

"You know as to expression, I told you I was unable to define that."

"Pshaw! well, I know they must be soft and Oriental in expression; her hair falling in luxuriant and jetty ringlets."

Edgar laughed: "No, it is straight and glossy as a raven's wing; but you had better trust to your own fancy for the creation of a beautiful idea, than to my prosaic description."

"Is she not very beautiful?"

"She has been considered exquisitely so, and is certainly still beautiful, though the unsparing hand of time has robbed her cheek of the first brightness of its bloom, and her eye has lost something of its lustre. But in London, the outward and visible signs of beauty are not so evanescent as in this new world of yours, or of ours shall I call it?" said he, turning, with a bright and playful smile, to Ellen.

"Call it ours," said Ellen, "or you will never learn to love it."

"Then, in this world of *ours*, the arts and mysteries with which the London ladies successfully wage war with the great adversary—Time—are neither valued nor understood. The desire to please others is one of the amiable weaknesses, perhaps you would term it, inseparably connected with a court and a king ; but here you are so far removed from their influence, that you are guided by a more independent and self-sufficing spirit, satisfied with your own approbation and that of your friends, as it regards intrinsic worth, while the charms and graces are comparatively neglected."

"Then, on the whole, you do not like our state of society," said Sophia, "for I am sure you would not have the charms and graces neglected."

"You are not easy to please, my fair cousin. I appeal to Ellen as to whether I gave the preference to London society."

"Certainly not, since you admitted that we were more strongly actuated by a desire to merit our own approbation and that of our friends, than to gain the admiration of the world ; and yet, perhaps, few would be philosophic enough to be satisfied to be totally deprived of the charms and graces," said Ellen.

"I did not suppose *you* could mistake me so far. Does not the wild flower of the forest often possess the brightest, the most graceful, and freshest native beauty ? but then the spontaneous growth of the country will never present to the eye of the observer a general aspect of beauty equal to that of the highly cultivated parterre. You are sufficiently candid, I am sure, Ellen, to admit that there may be different kinds of beauty belonging to different states of society, without detracting from either."

"Certainly," said Ellen.

"And I, too," said Sophia, "though I have not been complimented for candor, am willing to make the same admission, with this proviso; however, that the wild rose and wood anemone shall bear the palm of beauty from the hyacinth and tulip."

Edgar smiled, and replied, "I am certainly not disposed to

dispute this point with you, and am sufficiently ready to admit the charms of the wild rose and wood anemone."

"The wild rose and wood anemone," said Ellen, with a smile and a blush, should never forget that their chief charm consists in modest and unpretending simplicity, nor claim a pre-eminence over the richer and prouder beauties of the parterre."

"Oh, modesty and simplicity are two things I never admired very particularly; but there goes the dinner-bell to stop my non sense, and Ellen's blushes at my ridiculous pretensions."

CHAPTER XVII.

Seyd

Wozu die herrliche Natur Euch machte!
Erfüllt den Platz, wohin sie Euch gestellt,
Zu Eurem Volke steht und Eurem Lande,
Und kämpft für Euer heilig Recht.

SCHILLER'S *Wilhelm Tell*.

It was not until the supper hour that William Clifford returned home, and when he entered, there was an air of seriousness and abstraction visible on his countenance. Soon after supper was ended, he rose to leave the room, saying he had letters to write, and must retire to his own apartment. Sophia rallied him on growing so disagreeable and unsociable, and was proceeding to tell him how much Mr. Granville was vexed at his absence on the celebration of his birth-day, when a glance from Ellen's eye stopped her in the midst of her speech.

"Never mind, I shall never finish my speech. I was going to say something not worth hearing, so go and write those important dispatches; but, for heaven's sake, don't give me such another look, it inspires a solemn awe. Indeed, I am much more afraid of you than I am of my father."

"I am glad to hear it, it is very necessary you should be in awe of some one; so I will leave you with this salutary impression on your mind," so saying, William Clifford immediately withdrew. Scarcely half an hour had elapsed, when he heard a gentle tap at the door."

"Come in, Ellen," he said, "for I am sure no one but yourself would ask so gently for admission, and there is no one at present with whom I would so gladly talk as yourself."

Ellen was seated beside him immediately, but it was some minutes before either of them spoke; at length Ellen asked, in a soothing tone, if any particular cause of disturbance weighed upon his mind.

"Many causes of disturbance press heavily upon me, Ellen; some of which I fear are selfish; but then if we deliberately sacrifice our own happiness to the welfare of our country, surely, neither honor nor patriotism require that we should be totally divested of human feelings. And yet, I would that I were assured that my own happiness would be the only necessary sacrifice."

"I think I understand you, my dear brother; but is it necessary to sacrifice the long and cherished attachment of youth? to make both yourself and Olivia miserable? For this is not a time to speak with reserve on a subject that involves so much of happiness or misery. Olivia has never intimated, by the least word, that she loved you, and yet I can not doubt it."

The varying shades of color which passed over William Clifford's face, the gleam of pleasure which lighted his eye for a minute, but which was succeeded by an expression of the deepest sadness, showed plainly the strength of the internal conflict in his heart. After a few minutes, he replied, in a calm tone, though not free from emotion:

"It were vain to tell how strong, how deep is the love I bear her, beginning almost with my earliest recollections of myself; but it avails not—an impassable barrier separates us, Ellen. You have all the softness, the gentleness that belongs to woman, with the depth of reflection, the lofty sense of honor, which are more peculiarly attributed to man; and to you, therefore, I may safely open my heart—because you will feel for my weakness, without counseling me to sacrifice principle at the shrine of feeling."

"But may we not err, William, from an excess of what is called strength of mind? The constant habit of preferring duty to inclination, sometimes, I think, produces the habit of mind which induces one to view them always in opposition, and inclination is conquered when it should be indulged. Is not something due, even on the score of principle, to such an attachment as I believe subsists between Olivia and yourself, cherished for years? The hopes and expectations which are formed in her mind, are they to be thus suddenly and irrevocably destroyed?"

"When the blow is inevitable, is it not better for us both that it should descend at once? To what can such an attachment

lead, but misery on her side, weakness and irresolution on mine? Olivia's happiness is far dearer to me than my own—than every thing but my honor; but there are times when my country demands from me every sacrifice. Nor would I permit any consideration to deter me from offering myself and all most dear to me, as a willing sacrifice to the land of my birth and my love. And, indeed, my very love for Olivia would influence me forever to suppress its expression. She is now in the enjoyment of ease and affluence, under the protection of a father to whom she is fondly attached, and whose very life is bound up in hers. Do you think he would bestow her hand on one whom he would deem a rebel and a traitor? I have hoped from time to time, that England would be roused to a sense of the impolicy as well as tyranny of her oppressive measures, but in vain, and the hand of resistance must ere long be raised."

Ellen turned very pale, and looked steadfastly in William's face, without the power to reply; the images of horror which his speech had conjured up, deprived her of the power of utterance.

"Do you not remember, Ellen, the days when we read together Plutarch's Lives, how our hearts kindled at the noble deeds of his heroes, and how easy we then felt it would be to emulate their patriotism and self-devotion, if an opportunity offered? Call up again that lofty enthusiasm, and stand at my side, like the sister who has always participated and strengthened every generous feeling. The time has come, Ellen, when you should assist me to struggle against the weakness of my own heart."

"I still think, William," replied Ellen, with a tone of the deepest emotion, "that I could stand by your side and sustain you, if duty called, even at the post of death, though my heart should break in the act; but such an alternative, such images of horror as a civil war presents, dangers so fearful to those far dearer to me than my own life, can not be contemplated without inexpressible anguish. Do you not think there is still a possibility of averting so tremendous an evil?"

William looked for a moment with the tenderest compassion on Ellen, whose pale cheek and quivering lip evinced the internal agony of her feelings, and replied:

"We are taught to believe, dearest Ellen, that the hearts of princes are in the hands of God ; it is certainly possible that the calamity we fear may be averted ; but if we judge of the future only by the rules of human reason, we have little to hope. And is it not wisest, then, calmly and undismayed to prepare for the worst ? And in such a state of things, would it be kind to Olivia, or honorable to Mr. Granville, to endeavor to induce her to form ties or engagements, which could only prove a source of misery ? It would be useless to attempt to describe the anguish it has cost me to renounce hopes, the strength of which I scarcely knew, until I felt it to be necessary to destroy them. My love to Olivia I feel will be as lasting as my existence, yet no word of mine shall ever breathe it to her. She will learn to view me as a traitor ; she will cease to think I love her ; and these circumstances will destroy the affection she now feels for me—at least, I ought to hope so," he added, in a lower and somewhat faltering tone.

"You do not know Olivia's heart," said Ellen, "if you **can** suppose it would make her suffer less to believe you either unworthy or unfeeling. Would it not be better that she should know you renounce all hope of making her yours, from regard to her own happiness, and from a sense of duty ?"

"I think not. Olivia has unusual pride of character, which would aid her in banishing from her heart one whom she thought unworthy or unfeeling ; and her natural vivacity of disposition might then lead her by variety and amusement to obliterate all affection for one who had deserved to be forgotten."

These words were uttered with a tone of melancholy firmness, which convinced Ellen his resolution was taken ; and unable to repress her tears, she wiped them hastily away, and pressing William's hand between both hers, said :

"I must not weaken your heart, if I can not strengthen it, dear William. I am unable to say more now, but will retire and think over all you have said. Good-night. May God bless you !"

"And you also, my sister, and support us both."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I grew acquainted with my heart, and search'd
What stirr'd it so : Alas, I found it love.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

"ELLEN, my dear," said Mr. Clifford, as they were seated around the breakfast table, the following morning, "as you are the only one at present in favor, you must write one of your prettiest notes to Mr. Granville this morning, and beg that Olivia and himself will dine with us to-morrow. Tell him I request it as a particular favor."

"I would send a message too," said Sophia, "and William likewise, I fancy, but that we know this would prevent the old gentleman from coming, in his present mood ; really, I can not imagine what I have done to offend him, unless it were to speak disrespectfully of the King of England."

"And of the colonies," said Edgar.

"Yes, so long as he behaves himself. But I am no politician, and for my own part have never suffered much under his grievous oppressions ; and am willing to bear his yoke, to drink tea, even at the penalty of paying the tax, and to wear silk dresses—"

"And to talk nonsense, my child, about things on which you have never reflected, and know nothing about," said Mr. Clifford, with a gentle gravity of manner, which had the effect of silencing Sophia.

Mr. Walton who was dispatching his breakfast in silence, as was his wont, looked up with so much amazement at Sophia's presumption, that his glance made her blush, though she said in her usual gay tone, "I hope I have said nothing wrong, Mr. Walton."

"I have always been taught," said Mr. Walton, with great gravity, "that it required deep reflection, and a thorough ac-

quaintance with the measures of government, and the tendencies of those measures, besides a complete knowledge of ancient and modern history; correct and extensive ideas of the soil, climate, productions of a country, the character of its inhabitants, and a deep understanding of the springs of action which move the mind of man, to enable one to express with any propriety sentiments on political subjects; knowing that I am deficient in many of the requisite qualifications, I seldom form, and much seldomer venture to express opinions on such subjects."

"Then pray, Mr. Walton, excuse my presumption," said Sophia, with a smile; "I am sure I have not one of the requisite qualifications, and fear I never shall have."

Satisfied with the severity of his reproof, Mr. Walton finished his breakfast in silence, without taking any farther notice of Sophia. Ellen dispatched, immediately after breakfast, a messenger with a note to Mr. Granville, expressed with the feeling and tasteful simplicity that peculiarly characterized her style of writing, and which possessed the eloquence of the heart, which can not be feigned.

Mr. Granville was in no very pleasant humor, when Olivia announced the arrival of a messenger from Woodbourne, with a note from Ellen to himself. She watched with satisfaction the gradual change in his countenance, as he slowly read the note, for he did all things with an air of deliberation, but she knew him too well to be the first to break silence.

He handed the note to her saying, "Ellen Clifford is a good, sensible girl, a treasure of which any father might be proud."

This augured well. Olivia read the note and gave it back, saying, "With how much taste and feeling Ellen always expresses herself!"

"True, but the present question is, what answer shall we return to the invitation; were it not for Ellen I should certainly refuse it without a moment's hesitation."

"Did you observe Mr. Clifford's message, papa?"

"Yes, child; but really Richard Clifford has grown so strange and so wrong-headed in his opinions of late, I don't take the pleasure I used to do in his company."

"But he is such an old friend, papa, and is so fond of me; **you know** his house has always been like a home to me; and he **never makes any difference between me and his own daughters**"—she was going to say, but substituted, "Ellen and Sophia, except that he takes rather the most pains to please me, when I am at Woodbourne. And then too, papa, don't you remember how kindly he staid with you day and night, last winter when you had that dreadful fit of the gout? I am sure I shall always love him if it were only for that."

"Pshaw!" said Mr. Granville, turning from his daughter, with a countenance, in which returning tenderness of feeling and vexation at giving up his resentment were laughably blended. He proceeded slowly to arrange his writing materials, without giving Olivia the slightest intimation whether he should accept or refuse the invitation to Woodbourne; though she thought it contained an acceptance from the air of self approval and satisfaction with which he sealed the note, and sent it to the messenger.

Mr. Granville, however, mentioned the Cliffords no more, nor made the slightest allusion to the visit, until the following morning, when he ordered a servant to tell the coachman at what hour the carriage would be wanting. Olivia's eyes sparkled, and the color deepened in her cheek with pleasure, in spite of her efforts to assume an air of indifference; indeed she was almost vexed with herself for this involuntary emotion of pleasure; for her pride was almost as much wounded as Mr. Granville's, and her affection greatly more so, at William Clifford's apparent neglect.

They were greeted on their arrival at Woodbourne with a cordiality which might well have dispelled gloom or distrust, but Mr. Granville was "nursing his wrath to keep it warm," and Olivia experienced a painful conflict of feeling which clouded her natural vivacity; and for the first time, in the social circle of Mr. Clifford's fireside, she felt constraint and dissatisfaction. William too was thoughtful and absent, and Olivia felt that an undefinable sort of estrangement had commenced between them, which she could not comprehend, and had too much pride to attempt to re-

move. Once only her eye met that of William Clifford fixed upon her with so much sadness, and yet such tenderness, that her own involuntarily filled with tears. Her glance was instantly averted, and she addressed some trifling question to Sophia, to conceal her emotion.

This was both to William and Olivia the most painful day they had ever experienced in each other's society. It was the first time they had ever weighed their words, or considered their import, in addressing each other; it was the first interruption of mutual confidence and sympathy, and for the first time in their lives they felt as if they did not understand each other. Ellen was a deeply interested spectator, and felt scarcely less pain than the parties concerned. Mr. Granville preserved an affronted manner toward William Clifford all day, which he supposed, however, to be merely an air of dignified indifference; nor could he avoid occasionally indulging himself in uttering sarcasms against the political reformers of the present day, the import of which was too plain to be easily mistaken. The shafts fell blunted, however, by the playful good humor with which Mr. Clifford turned them aside; but the utmost efforts of his rare conversational talents, with Ellen's "small, sweet courtesies," could only mitigate Mr. Granville's dissatisfaction. Olivia was more successful in disguising her feelings, but it required all her pride to enable her to maintain a show of something like her natural gayety.

Once only during the day Olivia was seated next William Clifford, but instead of turning toward him, as she would once have done, and entering into kind and familiar conversation, she hastily averted her face with an air of coldness not unmingled with displeasure, and addressed some trivial question to Edgar Clifford, who was sitting near her. He immediately entered into an animated conversation with her. One glance was sufficient to assure him that some coldness or dissatisfaction existed between William and herself, and he felt some curiosity to see how his philosophic cousin would manage a lover's quarrel; for though no intimation had ever been given that any feeling of love existed between William and Olivia, still his quickness of eye and observation had led him strongly to suspect it. He encouraged

Olivia, therefore, to run on in a strain, which he knew was particularly displeasing to William. She was asking innumerable questions as to the manners and habits of the gay world in London, the style of dress, and expressing the liveliest interest in the veriest trifles; regretting that an evil destiny had cast her lot in the wilds of Virginia, rather than in the brilliant society of London, and declaring she had a serious idea of persuading her father to return to the Old Country. How much did she wish that William would utter one disapproving word, would cast a reproachful or even angry glance toward her; and once she ventured to look around to seek his eye, but she was disappointed—he rose just at this minute, and crossed to the opposite side of the room, to watch a game of chess between Ellen and Mr. Granville. His face was turned from her, nor did the slightest motion indicate that she was the subject of his thoughts. Olivia's color changed, her conversation grew languid—she felt it impossible longer to constrain her attention, and availing herself of the first pause in conversation, she called to Sophia to inquire what she was so busy about.

"Only trying to repair the mischief I have done to Ellen's embroidery. See, I have worked this leaf with too pale a shade of green; but, Edgar, do you not think it is almost 'as nicely worked as if Ellen herself had done it?'"

"Almost."

"Almost, indeed! it is quite as well done; is it not, Olivia?"

"Oh yes," said Olivia, scarcely looking at it.

"Well, Edgar, you see Olivia, who certainly is the best judge of embroidery, thinks my leaf is as well done as Ellen's, so you must give it up."

"Then I would say yours is the perfection of art, Ellen's the perfection of nature; I can almost see them trembling in the breeze."

"Pshaw! you know you are a poet, and therefore never see things as they really are."

Edgar smiled. "I never contradict any flattering suppositions my friends may choose to form concerning me, whether they may be true or not; for, after all, what a poor figure the best of us

would make, if we were stripped of the borrowed feathers with which our friends love to deck us. But I must acknowledge some little curiosity as to the manner in which I acquired the reputation of a poet."

Sophia only laughed and shook her head: "Does he not look guilty, Olivia?"

Olivia's eyes had wandered again across the room, and were fixed on the thoughtful and abstracted countenance of William Clifford, when Sophia's question roused her. She started, blushed a little, then said almost mechanically, "Yes, very."

"Very what?" said Sophia, laughing.

Olivia's embarrassment increased, as she durst not venture on an answer without betraying her complete inattention, when Edgar, who perceived her confusion, hastened to relieve her, by saying, "I am flattered that you agree with Sophia in thinking me a poet, but hope you will both take it for granted, and never put my powers to the test."

"No indeed," said Olivia, trying to rally; "I shall expect at least a sonnet for my share, or an ode."

"I might perhaps venture upon a sonnet, but if you want an ode, you must apply to my cousin William; his mind is the very stuff of which odes are made—lofty, abstracted, quite elevated above the region of sonnets or love elegies."

"Oh, I have no taste for the elevated and abstracted," said Olivia, in a tone of pique, and with a voice elevated above the ordinary pitch. She fancied William heard her, for his eye rested on her for a moment, with an expression of unusual seriousness, but it was instantly again withdrawn.

Olivia felt a sensation of relief when the servant announced that the carriage was waiting at the door to take them home. Ellen assisted Mr. Granville to dispose of his various wrappings in the most judicious manner, for the purpose of excluding every breath of air; expressed the kindest solicitude lest he should take cold; promised to go very soon to Windsor, to play chess with him, and endeavored, by every kind and winning method in her power, to restore his wonted cordiality and good-humor before parting. But his heart was softened only toward herself;

to her his manner was as affectionate as usual ; indeed the tones of his voice were gentler than was his wont, when he addressed her, but to the rest of the family his parting greetings had more of formality than of kindness, and he assured William particularly, that he should be extremely happy to see him, when he was not engaged in more interesting and important occupations than visiting an old man.

William was about to offer his arm to conduct Olivia to the carriage, but Edgar had offered his just as he approached, and he followed her in silence, until he heard her exclaim, "How very cold it is growing," he then advanced quickly to her side, and, with his natural kindness and openness of manner, said, "Let me bring you a thick shawl from Ellen or Sophia ; your silk cloak is too thin to defend you against the severity of an evening like this."

Olivia, ashamed to betray the emotion which this speech excited, replied hastily, without venturing to look toward him—"Oh, no, pray do not trouble yourself—I shall be quite warm enough."

William made no reply ; and she did not look toward him, as she felt conscious that her speech must appear ungracious and unkind to one she had always treated with the familiarity of a sister. Her heart reproached her, and, as she was about to get into the carriage, she turned around to offer a parting greeting to William, if he were still near her. He was standing beside her with a shawl in his hand, and only saying, "Allow me to put this around you, it will at least not incommode you," threw it around her shoulders.

"Oh, thank you ; it is perfectly unnecessary." But she looked in William's face—her eyes filled with tears, and she hastily offered her hand, withdrew it again immediately ; tried to return Edgar's parting smile ; then drew back in the carriage, and, had not her father's presence restrained her, would gladly have given vent to her painful and contending emotions by a burst of tears. Mr. Granville was completely absorbed in his own angry and sorrowful musings, and there was scarcely a word exchanged between them until they arrived at Windsor.

CHAPTER XIX.

Preaching, administering in every work
Of his sublime vocation, in the walks
Of worldly intercourse 'twixt man and man,
And in his humble dwelling he appears
A laborer, with moral glory girt,
With spiritual graces, like a glory, crowned.

WORDSWORTH.

As Ellen was sitting next morning in the library, a large volume open before her, on which her eyes rested, while her thoughts were wandering to William and Olivia, and various other subjects of anxious meditation, a servant entered to inform her that Mr. Morton was in the parlor, and wished to speak with her. His visits always afforded Ellen much pleasure, and she hastened down with alacrity to meet him ; but the affectionate joy with which she greeted him was damped by the air of unusual seriousness which overspread Mr. Morton's countenance.

"Is Miss Rebecca ill? Nothing bad, I hope, has happened?" asked Ellen, in a tone of apprehension.

"My dear child," said Mr. Morton, with a benevolent smile, "how quickly you take alarm; my sister is not ill: but sit down quietly, and compose yourself, and I will tell you what has brought me to see you this morning."

"I am composed—perfectly composed," said Ellen; though the tone of her voice did not confirm the truth of her assertion.

"You have often heard me speak of a brother in England, to whom I have always been fondly attached. Though long absence has, of course, rendered his presence less necessary to my happiness, it has scarcely diminished the affection which was once the strongest feeling of my nature."

"Yes, I recollect often hearing you mention your brother Frederick, and his grief at your determination to leave England."

"Yes, the parting scene rises as vividly before my mind as if it happened yesterday ; but I felt it to be my duty, nor do I repent the sacrifice, nor did I ever again expect to see England ; but I received a letter from my brother a few days ago, which altered my determination."

Ellen turned pale, and involuntarily caught his hand, saying, "Oh, Mr. Morton, you will not leave us forever ; how can we do without you !"

"No, my dear," said Mr. Morton, in a tone of deep emotion ; "if God spares me I shall return again ; but I could not refuse such a call as this, My brother's letter is written in a strain of the deepest dejection ; two children only remain to him of a numerous and lovely family ; and he is suffering cruelly from a lingering disease, from which small hopes are entertained of his recovery ; and he says his most earnest, indeed, almost his only wish, is to see my sister and myself before his death. Could I refuse to go ?"

"Oh, no, certainly not," said Ellen, in a faltering tone, "but I dread the voyage for you, at your age and with feeble health ; and I feel, too, that we can scarcely do without you. Indeed, you know not the consolation, the support, which your friendship and advice have afforded me, in every trial and doubt,"

"Nor do you know, Ellen, the pleasure I have felt in giving them ; the deep interest I have felt in your moral and religious improvement has been to me a source of delight. Nor can I think of leaving your father and his family, especially you, my child, without a deeper emotion of regret than a minister of God should feel in obeying the call of natural affection and duty. But I feel it is the weakness of faith, which makes me thus unwillingly trust all unreservedly in the hands of God. But it will be best for us all, and I trust it will make you feel only the more strongly, that the true fountain of religious feeling must be sought in God alone. To trust in those you love, to make idols of them, is the weakness of your nature, and it is chiefly this propensity which makes me anxious for you. I fear the broken reeds on which you lean may one day pierce you through."

Ellen sighed deeply ; a melancholy presentiment of all the

trials that might await her, cast a deep gloom over her spirits as she said, "I feel as if much suffering may be in store for me, ere your return; nor do I think only of my personal sufferings; the calamities which threaten the country must, I fear, involve my dear father and brother, and who can foresee what may be the result of the misguided measures of the English government."

"We must hope, we must pray for the best; and should matters proceed to the extremity of a civil war, I shall return again immediately to the land of my adoption; here are my spiritual ties, the flock for which I must answer to God; and here, too, will be my sympathies—rather with the oppressed than the oppressors. But you must not indulge these gloomy apprehensions. The stroke may yet be averted, and I trust in God the day will never come when the hand of brother shall be raised against brother, and father against son."

Long and earnestly did they converse on many subjects of deep and mutual interest. Many were the charges Mr. Morton gave her; many requests he made to her to attend to the spiritual and temporal wants of many of the poor members of his church. He left a sum of money in her hands, which he begged she would distribute, as she saw occasion, among several needy families, who had been for many years pensioners on his bounty. Among others, he particularly recommended to her special superintendence an Indian family, the father of whom had been converted to Christianity by his efforts, and who had abandoned his own people, and settled among the white inhabitants, from a strong attachment to the religion of the Gospel, and to the minister who had labored so unweariedly and so affectionately to reclaim him from spiritual darkness.

He spoke to her of each member of her family, and had some advice to give with regard to the best course of conduct to be pursued toward each; but his counsel respecting the regulation of her own heart and feelings was longest, most minute.

"Ellen, you may be married before I return." Ellen started; once the most transient change would not have passed over her countenance at such a suggestion. She had so entirely determined on the total improbability of such an event, that in all her plans

of life, marriage had not entered into any of her calculations ; and, though she was not aware that her feelings on this subject were at all changed, still the blood rose most eloquently to her cheek, though she smiled and said, "It is not at all probable."

Mr. Morton looked at her for a moment, with an expression of unusual seriousness, pausing, as if he were hesitating whether to utter or suppress the thoughts which occupied his mind ; apparently, he determined on the latter course, for he only said, "Beware how you fix your affections ; it is an unhappy lot for any one to love an object who is not worthy of their love ; but to you, Ellen, it would be lasting, deep, incurable misery ; and worse, even, than this, I know not even whether your eternal welfare would not be endangered. You would seek to hide the faults of him you loved, even from yourself, until you ceased to consider them as faults."

Ellen turned pale, and said in a low and agitated voice, "I trust, my dear friend, no such danger is in store for me ; did I believe it to be—"

Their conversation was just then broken off, by the entrance of Mr. Clifford, who had just returned from his morning's ride, and who heard, with deep and unaffected concern, the cause of Mr. Morton's visit. Mr. Morton was to set out in two or three days, with his sister, for New York, where they were to embark for England ; and his time would be so fully occupied in arrangements for his departure, that he would not have leisure to call for more than an hour or two at Woodbourne again before he set out. Even Sophia's gay countenance was shaded with sorrow, when she heard that Mr. Morton was about to leave them ; and every member of the family testified their concern, each in their own way, except Edgar Clifford. He had too much good taste and good breeding, however, to suffer his want of sympathy in the general sentiment of the family to become apparent. He had observed, for some time past, that Mr. Morton's eye was often fixed on him with a scrutinizing glance, particularly when he was conversing with Ellen, and a sense of restraint and undefined apprehension oppressed him in that gentleman's presence ; he was, therefore, not at all sorry for his departure, though he felt entire

confidence in his own power of concealing the secret feelings and purposes of his soul, and was sometimes amused to baffle the penetrating eye which vainly sought to read his heart ; yet the constraint was irksome, and he therefore experienced a sensation of relief when he heard Mr. Morton was about to depart.

The time was so short which elapsed before Mr. Morton and his sister set out for New York to embark for England, that he had not again an opportunity of conversing with Ellen. As he took her hand to bid her farewell for the last time, he said, in a low voice, " Farewell, my child ; remember and beware. May God bless and keep you."

Ellen could not reply, for tears, which she could no longer control, trickled fast down her cheeks. Mr. Morton hastily brushed away a tear that gathered in his eye, as he witnessed Ellen's emotion, and left the room ; for Ellen was the last of the circle to whom he offered his farewell greeting. She watched him from the window, until the trees hid him from her view, and then hastily retreating to her apartment, and closing the door, wept long and without constraint. She felt that she had lost a real friend, one, too, who " cared for her soul," and who had often imparted to her spiritual light and consolation. With him she felt a sense of security and peace, which was particularly soothing to one so distrustful of herself as was Ellen. She knew that she could not always trust her own heart ; its emotions were often too warm, too deep, too quick, to allow her reason to judge of its workings dispassionately ; and how often had Mr. Morton, with affectionate simplicity and earnest eloquence, warned her of error, and gently led her again into the right path.

There is scarcely a stronger, a tenderer bond of union, among all the ties which link together human sympathies, than that which exists between a truly Christian minister, who has grown old among his people, and his flock. All the most touching associations unite to strengthen this bond. It was in their minister's arms, in the helpless days of infancy, that they were consecrated to God ; it was his lips which had sealed and blessed their marriage vows at the altar ; and he, too, who had performed the last solemn and affecting rites of religion for those dearer than

their own souls, and consigned "dust to dust, and ashes to ashes, in the blessed hope of a joyful resurrection." How often has he knelt by the dying bed, and by the prayer of Christian faith, which looks to things unseen, poured light and consolation on the paths of those who were passing through the valley and shadow of death ! How often, too, has he visited the abodes of vice and misery, and with untiring Christian love and patience sought, by every means, to persuade their wretched inhabitants to turn from the error of their ways ; while his unfeigned sympathy, his unwearied efforts to relieve their sufferings, won, even from the most hardened, respect and gratitude, if they could not produce amendment ! Who is there among his flock who has not received some proof of his Christian love, to whom he has not spoken words of consolation in the hour of distress, whose errors he has not sought to remove, by the earnest pleadings of every reasonable and every Christian motive, attended by the heartfelt prayer of intercession ? whose holy resolutions has he not strengthened ? He has sought, like his Heavenly Master, to strengthen the feeble, to bind the broken heart, and to reclaim the sheep who had wandered from his fold, despising none, despairing of none ; viewing sinners with an eye of compassion, as laboring under a malignant and deadly disease, which every desire of his heart, every effort of his mind was employed to heal.

All felt Mr. Morton's loss, though they hoped it was only temporary ; but Ellen felt it far more deeply than any, for in him she had not only lost the Christian minister, but an intimate friend, a second father ; and forebodings, too, of coming ills, ere they met again, weighed heavily on her soul.

CHAPTER XX.

I priz'd every hour ~~that~~ went by,
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;
But now they are past, and I sigh,
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.

SHENSTONE.

EVERY circumstance, now, seemed to conspire to throw Ellen more and more exclusively into habits of intimacy with her cousin. Her father was more constantly employed, more thoughtful, and more abstracted every day; William, frequently absent, and when at home, much engaged in solitary studies; Sophia often with Olivia or Mrs. Herbert; Olivia now rarely came to Woodbourne, and her visits were always made when William was absent. Mrs. Herbert was much occupied with the superintendence of household matters at home, for few people desired more sincerely not only to be but to seem a first-rate manager of all domestic concerns, a pattern to all the neighboring matrons. Edgar had taken a severe cold, attended with inflammatory symptoms, which made it necessary to confine himself to the house, though not to his own apartment. He seemed unusually thoughtful, and Ellen was almost his constant companion, now translating Spanish with him, now amusing him by playful conversation when he was so inclined, or soothing him by more serious discourse when his mood was graver, or singing some sweet melody. Edgar was treated by every member of the family as one of themselves, and Ellen felt it not only a pleasure but a duty to pay all the attentions of a sister to him; indeed, all the daily ministrations of patient love, so particularly grateful in hours of bodily indisposition or mental depression, had always fallen to her peculiar province. There were many kinds of attention, which Sophia, from natural kindness of heart, and activity of mind, willingly rendered; but her impatience and versatility of character, her almost uncontrollable

vivacity of character, quite unfitted her for that sort of self-devotion, which enables its possessors, day after day, to renounce their own comforts, deny their own inclinations, and checking even the natural freedom of thought, force it into channels which may best suit the tastes and feelings of the objects of their care. Sophia contentedly resigned these efforts to Ellen, and satisfied her conscience, by saying, they were no burden but a pleasure to Ellen, who knew so much better, too, than she did, how to nurse the sick and soothe the desponding; there was a natural difference between them in this respect.

Ellen had never murmured at this unequal distribution of trouble and care; she would at any time perform a disagreeable office herself, rather than impose it on Sophia; but, so far from being irksome, it was to her the most grateful of tasks, to divide the trials, and soothe the sufferings of those she loved. There was a fountain of compassion and sympathy in her heart, which overflowed in bright streams, bringing gladness and refreshment to all around her, even the humblest, and those who had no claims to urge but being "desolate and oppressed;" but for those whom she had garnered in her heart, this fountain seemed inexhaustible. She was never weary of listening to their complaints, never thought she could do enough to contribute to their happiness or alleviate their uneasiness.

Edgar had peculiar claims on her attention, from indisposition and depression, both of which were magnified by her lively imagination, and the reflection that he was absent from his mother and family; and he appeared to feel the warmest gratitude for her attentions, and unflinching interest in her society. The days fled swiftly away, and Ellen, notwithstanding, many causes of disquietude, the heaviest of which was her anxiety concerning William, felt often a degree of pleasure, at which she could not help wondering, though she strove vainly to analyze it; but her mood was much more variable than it was wont to be, and the sweet and deep tranquillity which once dwelt in her heart had fled.

In every question of literary taste, Edgar appealed to her judgment. On all moral subjects he listened with the utmost attention

to her opinions ; and though, when Ellen would sometimes advert to the great truths of Christianity, as the only infallible guide to direct us in the paths of morality, the only clew which had ever been given to mankind to explore the hidden labyrinth of their nature, he would often, without directly contradicting her assertion, skillfully give the conversation another turn ; yet there were times when he would acknowledge that there was much that was lovely, much that harmonized with our natures, in the doctrines of the Gospel. He was pleased to mark the heartfelt delight, which illumined Ellen's eye, or animated the tones of her voice, at those acknowledgments ; and he also marked with secret triumph, the deep concern which overspread her countenance, when sentiments of a contrary nature escaped him. Once or twice, Mr. Morton's warning recurred to Ellen's mind ; but it was not suffered to harbor there for an instant ; she had never thought of looking on her cousin in the light of a lover—that could never be : it was entirely improbable ; hers was sisterly affection naturally excited by his character, and the circumstances in which they were placed ; and she thought Mr. Morton himself would have found nothing to condemn in their intimacy, especially when Edgar would assure her, as he sometimes did, that he had never wished for a moment to believe in the truth of Christianity, until he had conversed on the subject with her, as she had addressed him in a manner to disarm his prejudices, and to place many of the facts and doctrines of the Gospel in a new and striking light to his mind. This was uttered in so simple and serious a manner, as to convey nothing of personal compliment, at which the most sensitive could blush ; he did not intimate that he wished to believe to gratify her, or because she believed. One less deeply skilled in human nature, would have thought these the most gratifying assurances ; but he saw that Ellen's feelings were purified and exalted far above the common standard, and perceived the hope, that he would be led to see and embrace truth, would impart to her a pleasure more lively, than any triumph of personal vanity in the influence she possessed over his mind. When a passing thought of Mr. Morton's warning for a moment disquieted her heart, she immediately remembered these

assurances of Edgar Clifford's, and thought if Mr. Morton could know the sort of influence she exerted over Edgar's mind, he would approve the intimacy of their intercourse.

There was one inmate of their domestic circle at Woodbourne, who by no means approved the very intimate footing on which Edgar had been received in the family—Mrs. Herbert. She did not think, however, of any particular danger arising from their intercourse; for had she supposed there was any probability of its ending in marriage, she would have considered it a danger, notwithstanding his rank, expectations, and the superior elegance of his mental and personal endowments. No two natures could be more dissimilar than Edgar Clifford's and her own; and she had, from the commencement of her acquaintance with him, conceived a sort of aversion toward him, though she would by no means have acknowledged any sentiment stronger than that of moral disapprobation. This disapprobation was often expressed, particularly to Ellen—sometimes on occasions which Ellen felt to be unjust, and on others, when she could not but think Mrs. Herbert's censures far more severe than the frivolous causes of her displeasure justified. A slender knowledge of human nature would have taught Mrs. Herbert, that to be frequently called on to act as the champion of another, is one of the most certain of all means to awaken or confirm partiality. The arts of address were entirely unknown to her, and even had they been understood she would have scorned to use them.

CHAPTER XXI.

What's here? The School for Scandal! Pretty schools!
Well—and art thou proficient in the rules?
Art thou a pupil? is it thy design
To make our names contemptible as thine?—
Old Nick, a Novel! Oh! 'tis mighty well!
A fool has courage when he laughs at hell.

We find thee fitted for each evil work;
Do print the Koran, and become a Turk.

CRABBE'S Tales.

It was on a morning of unusual severity, during the period which we have been mentioning, that Edgar Clifford was confined to the house from indisposition, when Ellen, Sophia, and himself had drawn their chairs around the fire, in the library, now talking or reading as best suited the humor of the minute, when Mrs. Herbert unexpectedly entered. Edgar felt chagrined at her entrance, though carefully suppressing every external symptom of dissatisfaction, he greeted her with that high-bred, yet somewhat distant courtesy, which is of all manners best calculated to repel any approach toward familiarity; as there was nothing more abhorrent to him than that sort of freedom of speech which is called being plain-spoken.

Sophia seized Mrs. Herbert's hand, saying, "Oh, my dear aunt, I am delighted to see you, for really I am tiring not a little of reading and retirement; but are you not almost frozen? And where are the children and my uncle? And how is little Charles's cold? Have you finished the—"

"One question at a time, Sophia; you know my mind is very slow and deliberate. I can not follow the rapidity of your flights," said Mrs. Herbert, slowly untying her bonnet and laying aside her shawl.

"Then," said Ellen smiling, "let the first question be, 'Where are the children and my uncle?'"

"Oh, I left them at home: I have only come to look in upon you for an hour or two."

"But the day is so intensely cold; let me send the carriage, and ask my uncle to bring the children over, and remain to-night. You know it has been some time now since you spent a night with us," said Ellen.

"I am not accustomed to shrink from every blast like a greenhouse plant. I should be ill fitted for the various offices, which my duty as the mistress of a family compels me to discharge, if I could not brave a day in January. My arrangements are made for the day, and it is necessary I should return; besides, you are so busily engaged," she added, glancing at the volume that lay open on the table, "I think you can scarcely want any additional company."

"Oh, you are one of ourselves," said Ellen, in one of her sweetest tones; "you can not doubt that we want you. But how is Charles's cold?—you have said nothing about it."

"It is not my habit," said Mrs. Herbert, with a sidelong glance at Edgar, "to magnify every trifling indisposition. I have used no extraordinary care, and the child is now nearly as well as usual."

"Indeed I think," said Sophia, "sickness would be perfectly insupportable, were it not for being nursed and humored. I always indulge myself in every privilege that belongs to the sick, when I am at all indisposed—and you know Ellen lets me give myself as many airs as I choose."

"Yes, I am well aware that Ellen has humored and spoiled you too, as she does, indeed, all who come under the sphere of her influence, unless they have sufficient consideration for her, and sufficient self-denial themselves to prevent it."

Ellen colored deeply, her countenance showed that some painful thought was passing through her mind, though she tried to turn Mrs. Herbert's words off as lightly as possible, by saying in a playful tone, "At least, my conscience acquits me of having spoiled you, aunt. I never have been able to persuade you to relax in the least from the severity of your self-discipline; your refusal to indulge me in the slight request of remaining with us

to-night, instead of exposing yourself to the severity of the cold again this morning, is a proof of this."

"Yes, my determinations are generally guided by fixed rules of conduct, and are therefore not easily shaken. One of these rules is never to magnify trifles, **another** never to acquire habits of self-indulgence, which would unfit me for usefulness, and another—"

"Oh dear! aunt," interrupted Sophia, "how intolerable such bondage must be."

"To you perhaps it would, as the impatience which prompted you to interrupt me just now, before I had finished my speech, testified; to me, however, it has become pleasant—a second nature."

"Excuse me for interrupting you," said Sophia, with an air of penitence, "pray finish your speech now."

"I was about to observe," said Mrs. Herbert, with unmoved gravity, "that another rule of action with me is, when once I have formed a determination, even on an apparently trivial subject, never to alter it from mere inclination or caprice."

"But do you not distinguish between acting from caprice or from inclination?" asked Ellen.

"Mere inclination is scarcely a more justifiable motive of action than caprice."

There was a moment's pause in the conversation after this observation; for Edgar took especial care never to contradict any of Mrs. Herbert's assertions, as he knew there was nothing that would give her more pleasure than the opportunity an argument would afford of introducing many observations for his special edification; a species of schooling to which he did not feel at all inclined to submit from her. Ellen was afraid to reply, lest she should provoke something disagreeable or painful to Edgar; and Sophia was silent, from the dread of introducing a tiresome disquisition on morals. The silence was at length broken by Mrs. Herbert's inquiring of Ellen, where Mr. Clifford and William were.

"My father is out on the farm, and William has been absent for two days from home."

"Both usefully employed, I am sure. And pray what studies have I interrupted this morning?" she asked, moving at the same time toward a table, on which lay an open volume, and examining the title-page, she threw it down, saying, contemptuously, "Oh, something of Voltaire's plays, I suppose, though it is a sealed book to me, and I am glad of it."

"Yet some of these plays are very beautiful, and express only pure and elevated sentiments," said Ellen.

"You are one of the last persons, Ellen, I should ever have suspected of studying and admiring the productions of an infidel writer, alike to be abhorred by the Christian for his life and writings," said Mrs. Herbert, in a tone of mingled regret and reproach."

"I read a passage from *Alzire* to Mr. Morton a few weeks ago, and he thought it very beautiful, and only remarked that it was a pity that a mind so capable of conceiving pure and elevated ideas as Voltaire's, should have been so miserably perverted by the wickedness of his heart. I agree perfectly with you in the strongest general condemnation of his writings, at least, so far as I understand their tendency from critical notices and the remarks of those who are conversant with them—my inclination and principles would alike forbid my reading them. But must we throw away the gold with the dross?"

Edgar smiled approvingly, and seemed about to speak, but Mrs. Herbert, who had with evident difficulty restrained herself from interrupting Ellen, immediately replied: "Certainly, certainly we must. We can not touch pitch without being defiled. The beginnings of evil are very insidious, and for this reason we can not adhere too strictly to the observance of rules of action, few of which, I think, are more important, than that which teaches us to avoid infidelity in every form, however specious, as we would plague or pestilence."

Mrs. Herbert paused here, as if to give full weight to what she had said, and looked round upon her audience. It was impossible to discover whether Edgar applied her remarks to himself, for his countenance wore an air of patient and polite indifference, through which it was vain to seek to penetrate. A quick

and sidelong glance at Ellen, told him how deeply and painfully she felt Mrs. Herbert's insinuation, and this manifestation of interest in himself imparted a momentary glow of pleasure to his countenance. Mrs. Herbert's impertinence, as he deemed it, he determined to treat with an air of the most provoking and innocent calmness. Could he have seen the painful mixture of thoughts and feelings which were passing through Ellen's mind, his pleasure at the interest her emotion evinced, would have been much alloyed. Though Edgar had never expressed infidel opinions, or even hinted that he entertained them, in Mrs. Herbert's presence, still she knew her aunt was fully persuaded they existed in his mind; and with the vexation and concern she felt, at hearing him thus assailed, were mingled painful thoughts and feelings of self-reproach and self-examination. A few months ago, and how strange should she have thought it, that any circumstance could make her feel keenly, almost personally, an attack upon infidelity.

Mrs. Herbert was pleased to see that Ellen, at least, felt her remarks painfully, and hoped, therefore, they would be useful; she was no nice analyzer or discriminator of mixed sensations; pain, she thought, should be a necessary consequence of error, and satisfied with having produced the desired result, on the mind of one of her auditors, she pursued this advantage:

"As to Mr. Morton's authority, Ellen," she continued, "you know I do not bow to the opinions of any man with implicit deference. I am neither of Paul nor of Apollos, and though I have the highest respect and regard for Mr. Morton's Christian virtues, still I must acknowledge, since you force it from me, that I have always considered him as too latitudinarian in his opinions, as, indeed, the members of the Church of England too often are."

"Indeed, aunt Herbert, you drive me to absolute despair," said Sophia; "if Mr. Morton does not merit your approbation, I could never hope to do so, if I lived to grow twice as old as Methuselah."

"I did not say that I did not approve Mr. Morton's character on the whole. I only mentioned his faults, his weak points."

"We may truly say of him," said Ellen, "that e'en his failings lean to virtue's side. If he has faults, I have never discovered them."

"No, nor ever would; he is one of your idols, and, of course, is faultless in your eyes; but I can see most clearly the faults of those who are dearest to me."

"How much I wish I could blind you to mine," said Sophia. "I think we have a right to expect partiality from our friends, or there would be no pleasure in having them. Do you not think so?" turning to Edgar, with a smile.

"By no means," he replied, with an air of imperturbable gravity, "those are the truest and most valuable friends, who most frequently administer the bitterest reproofs; their worth is inestimable."

Mrs. Herbert looked toward Edgar with a visible expression of surprise and disappointment; she thought he had uttered an incontrovertible truth, and this, too, with so grave an air that he could not be answered with propriety, as if he had been jesting. In her mind, truth was too sacred and unalterable to allow of any opposition to it, whatever provocation or dislike she might feel toward the person who uttered it. She was therefore foiled, and for some minutes silent, but at length said:

"The words, bitterest reproofs, perhaps convey a somewhat mistaken idea of the nature of those admonitions which should proceed from a faithful friend; you should rather have said, Mr. Clifford, those are the truest and most valuable friends who most frequently administer the truest and most searching reproofs."

Edgar bowed with an air of humility, and replied, in a tone of deferential inquiry, "Are not *those* reproofs which contain most truth, generally the bitterest, madam?"

Mrs. Herbert drew up in her chair, and gave a little cough, to collect her ideas, as she was somewhat puzzled how to reply to this speech. But Ellen quickly interposed for her relief, by saying: "You know the words, bitter reproof, convey two ideas: bitter in substance, and bitter in form and manner. The truest reproof will be bitterest in substance to those who possess tender consciences; but then if it comes from a friend, it should be so kind

in manner as to carry a balm for the wound inflicted, in the apparent strength of the love, which wounds only to heal, and causes not a pang which it does not participate.

"I will close the discussion," said Mrs. Herbert, "with one concluding observation : There may as easily be too much gentleness in reproving as too little. These very gentle reproofs are seldom sufficiently felt. This is your error ; I would have you correct it, Ellen."

"And I would have you never to correct it," said Edgar, in a voice so low, it only reached Ellen's ear, who was sitting nearest to him. She replied only by a smile.

CHAPTER XXII.

What, keep a week away? seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? and love's absent hours,
More tedious than the dial eight score times?
Oh weary reckoning.

Othello.

It was toward the close of February, Edgar Clifford received a letter from his father, which appeared to throw him into a fit of unusual seriousness. His indisposition was quite removed, and before this letter arrived, his spirits seemed all animation and joyousness. It was one of those bright seasons which sometimes came over him, during which the charm of his manner, the attraction of his conversation, the very sweetness and brilliancy of the smiles which illumined his usually thoughtful countenance, made the fascination and interest of his society irresistible to all within the sphere of his influence—Mrs. Herbert alone excepted. The change that came over him was therefore more striking; but as he expressed no anxiety or solicitude, and said nothing of the contents of the letter he had received, except to change his father's cold and complimentary messages to his uncle and cousins, to something kinder and more natural both in word and sentiment, motives of delicacy prevented any member of the family from making any inquiry as to the cause of the change that had come over him. A thousand conjectures passed through Ellen's mind as to the nature of Lord Fitz-Claire's letter; and she could not avoid being conscious that they occupied her mind so constantly and anxiously, as to destroy its tranquillity. Edgar perceived Ellen's disturbance clearly, nor did he hesitate to ascribe it to the real cause; and he often thanked her by the silent language of the eye for her solicitude on his account.

After some days had elapsed of painful suspense to Ellen, Edgar at length announced his intention of setting out in two or

three days for New York. All looked surprised ; Sophia and Mr. Clifford expressed their concern, at his intended departure, but the paleness which overspread Ellen's face, told how much more deeply she felt the separation. A sickening foreboding of evil seemed to come over her ; but conscious that her emotion was unreasonable and excessive, she sought to subdue all appearance of it. Edgar admired the delicacy and politeness, which prevented any inquiry as to the motives of his journey ; but he felt that some explanation was due to his friends, and proceeded to say, that he was induced to take this journey partly from necessity, and partly from motives of duty, as some of his acquaintances in England had arrived in New York, one of whom his father wished him to see ; and one of them was one of his earliest and most intimate friends, whose misfortunes and pecuniary embarrassments had driven him from England to America.

"I hope it will not be necessary that you should be a long time absent," said Mr. Clifford. "We shall scarcely know how to do without you."

"Indeed we shall not," said Sophia ; "pray do not stay long, though I dare say, you will find your English friends, and the gayeties of New York more attractive than the retirement of Woodbourne."

"My dear cousin," said Edgar, with a look of eloquent reproach, "this charge is really not worth replying to. You see that I have not had the courage to resolve to leave Woodbourne, or to announce my intention of doing so, for days after I received my father's letter."

"How lonesome Ellen and I will be, when you are gone. My father and William are always so busy, nowadays ; Mr. Morton away : Mr. Granville angry with every body but Ellen ; Olivia so seldom visits us now ; uncle George always complaining ; aunt Caroline always discharging domestic duties ; we shall miss him sadly, shall we not, Ellen ?"

Edgar's eyes were fixed on Ellen with an expression of so much tenderness and thoughtfulness, that she could not meet his glance, but hastily averting her face said, "Yes, very much."

"Now," said Sophia, "any one that did not know Ellen as

well as I do, would suppose she felt no concern about the matter ; but when you are better acquainted with her, you will learn that 'Yes, very much' from her, means more than a volume of protestations from common people."

"I am well enough acquainted with her now to believe this," said Edgar, with a slight emphasis which conveyed to Ellen's mind as strongly as he meant it should, his implicit confidence in her affection.

It was in vain Ellen endeavored to rally her spirits during the day ; though she chid herself for such unreasonable and excessive depression. But then, as Sophia and Mr. Clifford had both remarked, it would be impossible for any one not to feel the deprivation of Edgar's society, who had been for many months accustomed to it ; and then, too, he expressed so much reluctance to leave Woodbourne, and looked often pensive almost to sadness, which made Ellen fear some unexplained cause of uneasiness oppressed his mind. Each day seemed to pass quickly, though painfully, for every hour now was precious.

Two or three mornings before Edgar's departure, he rode over to Windsor, to take leave of Olivia, and to his extreme annoyance found Mrs. Herbert there. Olivia expressed, with much warmth and kindness, her regret to hear that he was about to leave them ; which Edgar received with graceful and grateful acknowledgments. Mrs. Herbert made no observation except to inquire how long he thought it probable he should remain in New York

"Really, I am unable to say precisely how long I shall remain, madam, as the length of my stay will depend on many circumstances," replied Edgar.

Mrs. Herbert was silent, and Edgar, to change the conversation, began to examine with attention a beautifully drawn landscape. "How very finely this landscape is executed. Pray who is, or was the artist?" said he, turning to Olivia.

"He is still in the land of the living, at least, I hope so, for I liked him very much. Did you never hear Ellen speak of Colonel Rivers an English gentleman, who spent several months with us, nearly two years ago?"

"No, I don't recollect ever hearing her mention any such person."

"Indeed, it is very ungrateful of her then, for he was a most devoted admirer of hers, and a very accomplished, agreeable gentleman withal, yet I did not like him well enough to be willing to give Ellen up for his sake, and was therefore glad when she refused his addresses; though it is true I had some compunctious visitings, for I never saw a person take a rejection so deeply to heart. It was in consequence of Ellen's cruelty this picture came into my possession, for I am sure it was at first designed as a present for her.

Edgar saw Mrs. Herbert's glance riveted on him, and instantly averted his eye; and said, in a tone of assumed carelessness: "And why was my fair cousin so insensible to the attractions of so accomplished a gentleman, and so devoted an admirer?"

"Oh, perhaps her hour had not come: you know there is a fate in these things; though I rather think she has never seen any one whose attractions were sufficiently strong to induce her to leave her father, family, and country."

In spite of his power of disguising his feelings, Edgar felt his color change a little at this speech; but he had no time to reply, for Mrs. Herbert immediately took up the thread of discourse, by observing that Colonel Rivers's principles, or rather his want of principle, would have been a sufficiently strong reason to prevent Ellen Clifford from ever entertaining the most transient preference for him; that he had had sufficient candor to acknowledge his disbelief in the truths of the Christian religion; and it was not surprising, after this avowal, to find that his feeling of the law of duty, and his sense of the strength and extent of moral obligations, were very defective.

"And were these, then, Ellen's reasons for rejecting Colonel Rivers?" asked Edgar, with a composure of tone and manner which effectually concealed the interest he took in the question.

"These would, surely, have been sufficient," replied Mrs. Herbert, "even had Ellen's heart been touched by Colonel Rivers's pleasing qualities. But this knowledge respecting his principles being gained at an early period of their acquaintance,

must have effectually prevented such a woman as Ellen Clifford from ever feeling an attachment for him."

"Do you not think," asked Olivia, "we may love a person of whose opinions or principles we disapprove?"

"Some persons may, no doubt; but I am sure Ellen Clifford could not," said Mrs. Herbert.

"Well, perhaps not. I am sure it would be the greatest misfortune that could befall Ellen to place her affections on a person she could not esteem. She has at once such strong and lofty ideas of duty, such deep, unaffected genuine devotion for those she loves, she would be the most miserable of creatures to love, and feel that the object of her affections was not worthy of her."

"Are you, then, of that stern school?" said Edgar, in a low tone, to Olivia, "whose faith it is, that love can not exist without moral approbation?"

"Not exactly; yet I think there must be, at least, admiration of noble and lofty qualities; some esteem, if not complete moral approbation; but all other things being equal, I think we should love those most of whom we most approved," said Olivia, with a slight blush; for she was conscious that she had been involuntarily contrasting William and Edgar Clifford in her own mind: and how immeasurably superior to her seemed the object of her early and only love!—yet she no longer felt proud of loving him, for she began to think that her affection was unreturned.

Edgar gave the conversation another turn, and concealed, under the appearance of indifference, much interest and many strongly-conflicting feelings. A consciousness of his own very unusual powers of pleasing, which had hitherto proved irresistible to all on whom their influence had ever been exerted—the knowledge, also, that he had awakened in Ellen's heart a very strong interest, did not assure him as to the nature and strength of this emotion. Her feelings were so strong, so deep, and shown often with such unaffected simplicity, even when she was least conscious of displaying them, he could not help fearing these demonstrations of regard which, from another woman, he would have considered as proofs of the tenderest affection, might have proceeded only from friendship and compassion for errors which

he knew she regarded as deeply endangering virtue, and totally destructive of happiness. The idea of compassion mingled with love, from Ellen, was delightful, because he was sure those sentiments, in her mind, would strengthen each other; but the compassion of Christian benevolence was utterly distasteful to him. Could the interest which he had apparently excited in Ellen's mind proceed only from the desire to make a proselyte to her faith? Her religious enthusiasm partook of the same deep and lofty character with her brother's patriotism; and Edgar could believe that either of them would be led to the stake or the scaffold rather than abandon their principles. This sort of enthusiasm, it is true, he ascribed, in a great measure, to an imaginative temperament, strengthened by a life of retirement, when natural objects, the books they read, the studies they pursued, especially those of which Ellen was fondest, had created for her a land of dreams, unreal, unsubstantial, but so bright, so beautiful, that he could not wish to dissolve the enchantment.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Where'er I roam,
Thou shalt be with my soul ! Thy soft, low voice
Shall rise upon remembrance, like a strain
Of music heard in boyhood, bringing back
Life's morning freshness. Oh ! that there should be
Things, which we love with such deep tenderness,
But through that love to learn how much of woe
Dwells in an hour like this. ' MRS. HEMANS.

WHEN the sun is setting to-morrow evening, where will Edgar be ?" said Ellen, involuntarily, to herself, in a low tone, as she stood at the library window to watch the last rays of the setting sun. She thought herself quite alone ; but upon changing her position, was startled to see Edgar standing beside her.

"This is the last sunset we shall see together for a long time," said Edgar, in a tone of sadness. "I never was superstitious until I knew you, Ellen ; but now I find myself seeking omens in every thing, and finding them evil. Do you know, the old song Miss Granville sang this morning—'Hame never came he,' struck very sadly upon me ? It is foolish, I know, but I can not help those feelings. Are you ever infected with them ?"

"Often, very often ; but I try to subdue them by endeavoring to rely more firmly, more constantly, on that good Providence which watches over and guides us, whether in weal or woe."

Edgar sighed. "You should then pity him the more who has no such consolation. I can not flatter myself that a creature so insignificant in the universe can be the object of particular care and protection of the mighty Creator of suns and worlds, the number and magnitude of which our very imaginations can not comprehend. But do not turn away thus coldly, Ellen ; you will not let your religious faith place an impassable gulf between us ; you will not think coldly or unkindly of me, I trust,

when I am away, because our creeds are not the same. Belief is not voluntary."

Edgar thought Ellen brushed away a tear; but the motion was so quick, he could not be sure; and she looked steadily at him as she replied: "You know that I will not think either coldly or unkindly of you; nor do I suppose that all traces of the errors of years could at once be obliterated by the strongest effort of the will that they should be so. But have you ever sought the truth? Have you ever examined the evidences on which the Christian's hope and faith are founded?"

"Perhaps not as I ought to have done. But I have thought often on the subject, conversed frequently upon it, and read too—"

"But on the wrong side of the question, I fear."

"Yet, you will not give me up as hopeless," said Edgar, in a tone in which tenderness was mingled with reproach, "you know not the strength of the influence you can exert on my mind. If I ever become a convert to the doctrines of Christianity, you Ellen, alone could be the instrument of the change; for you alone have made me perceive the beauty of its precepts. Promise me that you will not forsake me, that you will not withdraw your regard, either on account of my past or future errors. I have no friend but yourself, in whom I could repose unlimited confidence. You have nothing to fear from the contamination of my principles—I would not change yours even if I could. Have you not sufficient confidence in me, to make such a promise? You know not from what you might save me!"

Deeply moved at his words, and the manner in which they were uttered, Ellen was silent from emotion, until Edgar said, in a tone of sadness: "The brightest vision of my life then is dispelled. It was presumptuous in me to flatter myself, that I had obtained your friendship and confidence, or to solicit their continuance. I should have felt more strongly the immeasurable distance which separates purity, such as yours, from unworthiness such as mine."

"You mistake my feelings entirely—can you doubt my friendship?" and Ellen's color deepened as she said this. "If you can

distrust me, how useless it would be to profess, what I thought my whole conduct had declared."

Ellen's countenance and manner at once re-assured him, and his face became radiant with pleasure. "Pardon me, Ellen, I know it was unkind, unjust, to doubt the friendship which has been for months past the highest delight of my life—the most precious balm of my existence. But I am deeply, painfully conscious, that a barrier which appears to you impassable, separates us. You can not repose confidence; you even regret your friendship for me, whom, viewing as an unbeliever, you consider as guilty before man, and accursed of God."

He saw the paleness of deep and painful emotion overspread Ellen's face, as he uttered these words, and her voice was somewhat faltering as she replied: "Your views on the most important of all subjects, will, I trust change; and I should be a most unfaithful friend, were I not to say, that I consider it essential both to your temporal and eternal welfare that they should. To say how earnestly I wish this change should take place, would require language more forcible than words to express."

"And without this change, 'twere vain to hope for your love, that is to say your affection, your friendship, your confidence?" Edgar marked the crimson flush which dyed Ellen's cheek, when he substituted the word friendship for love. But it was fitting as the hues of evening, which change imperceptibly ere the eye can dwell on their beauty, and her countenance was as tranquil, her voice was as calm as usual, when she said, "I did not say so. I have already the strongest confidence in the natural generosity of your heart, your nobleness of disposition, your honorable principles; but believing, as I do, that all human virtue is frail and evanescent without Divine assistance, while you entertain your present views, how can I hope for the continuance of these generous and honorable feelings!"

During this speech, Edgar's countenance wore an expression which Ellen could not read. He looked earnestly in her face for two or three minutes without replying, then said: "Oh Ellen, how differently we feel! I could not distrust you, I could not permit dogmas about which the wisest of all ages have differed,

to overthrow my confidence in you utterly. I could not permit you to solicit from me indulgence for error, continuance of friendship, without hastening to assure you, that I could not help granting your wishes, even if I would. But I have hoped, I have expected too much. I have been misled by your angelic goodness, to attribute the passing and delicate kindness you have shown me, to some congeniality of feeling, some peculiar sentiment of friendship, rather, than to that principle which would make you think it a duty to consider the feelings, and contribute to the happiness of a stranger, a guest, and a near relation. Pardon me, Ellen, for the mistake."

"Or rather," said Ellen, in a tone which showed how deeply she was hurt, "you should ask me to pardon you for your injustice. So far from laying any claim to angelic goodness, I feel such a term applied to me but a cruel mockery; yet, I think, I have a right to feel that I have given you no reason to question the sincerity of my friendship."

"Even this half assurance is precious to me, Ellen. I grieve to have wounded you, perhaps I have been unjust; but place yourself in my situation, and you will then know how to make allowance for my feelings. I have an undue share of pride, I will acknowledge—'a stubborn sort of something,' which enables me, not only to disregard, but to defy the disapprobation of the world. I am willing they should think of me as they list. But as it regards you, Ellen, I have no such support, your lightest censure wounds me more deeply than the disapprobation of the whole world besides:" then, as if recollecting himself, and thinking he had said too much, he added, "for you are the only person in the world, who has ever seemed to understand me. You know not the temptations to which I have been exposed—admitting the doctrines of your faith to be true—I was never taught them in infancy, never learned to love or believe them. My father is what you call an unbeliever, as you are already aware. My mother never sought to implant any opinions on this subject in my mind. Have you forgotten that I once before mentioned this to you, on an occasion, which I, at least, shall never forget, when you promised to be my friend under all circumstances?"

"And have I broken this promise?"

"Oh, no! Each day has taught me how precious and how indispensable to my happiness that friendship is; but then, Ellen, pardon me, if I say it has not been severely tried, and can I help fearing, when you acknowledge you have no confidence in me? Should any thing occur to cast a shade of doubt over my character, I could not hope for a favorable judgment. The very principles of your religious faith would lead you to distrust and condemn me. The more valuable and dearer the gift you have made me, the more deeply I feel the insecurity of its tenure. May I hope that, even if circumstances should arise which to you seem suspicious, you will judge as favorably of me as you can? that you will not withdraw your friendship? This assurance only can tranquilize my mind during my absence. That I have committed errors, that I have been guilty of many imprudences, I will not deny. Should these reach you, when I am gone, in some exaggerated form, suspend your judgment until we meet—do not condemn me unheard."

"I promise you this. But is not candor one of the most indispensable conditions of friendship? Would it not be better to acquaint me with any circumstances which may reach me, as you observe, in an exaggerated form?"

"No, Ellen, you must trust me entirely or not at all; my hard fate is such as to put it entirely out of my power to repose in you the unlimited confidence I wish to do, as it respects not only every present, but every past feeling of my life. There is much which oppresses my mind, which I ought not to confide even to you. The dearest wish of my heart I can not disclose to you, Ellen. I scarcely dare hope it will ever be fulfilled; and it will probably remain forever buried in my heart.

Ellen felt that the varying emotions, which she was herself unable to analyze, and which succeeded each other with such strength and rapidity, were but too visibly painted in her countenance; and hastily turning to the window, said, in a tone of as much calmness, as she could assume:

"I do not wish to extort your confidence, nor even to possess it, if you think it best and wisest to withhold it."

"You do not then wish to know my feelings," he said, with a look of mingled tenderness and sadness, beneath which Ellen's glance sank. "You judge wisely, best, perhaps, for us both. Circumstances may arise which will separate us, **perhaps**, forever; but wherever fortune may throw me, it will be the dearest, the only pleasure of my existence to think that I am remembered by you."

Ellen became extremely pale, and tears trembled in her eyes, despite of her efforts to suppress them; her voice faltered as she said, "Surely, if you **wish** to remain in Virginia, you are in this respect the arbiter of your own destiny; if you leave us forever, will it not be your own choice?"

"There are many motives, besides inclination, which determine our fate in life. Did it depend on my own wish, you can not, I am sure, doubt what my choice would be. Worldly-minded, as I know you think me, I would prefer the lowliest dwelling in the wilds of Virginia, to the splendor of a palace in the first country of the world, my own native land, could it secure me the delight of your society, the blessing of your friendship. But I can scarcely flatter myself the course of events will ever render this possible."

He looked in Ellen's face as he uttered these words, as if to read her very soul; but Ellen cast down her eyes, and remained silent for some minutes; at length she said:

"Are you certain that you will ever return to us **again**?"

"As certain as a man can presume to be about **any thing** in futurity. What could induce me to leave Virginia without once more seeing *you*? How little do you know my feelings and intentions?"

Ellen was again silent; she scarcely knew **what meaning** to **affix** to Edgar's words, or in what manner **she ought** to reply to them. He took a small ruby cross, which was suspended by a black ribbon around his neck, and carefully concealed in the folds of his dress, and said, with a smile:

"Would you have suspected me of superstition, of wearing a Popish relic next my heart?"

"Indeed, I **should** not," replied Ellen, with a bright smile;

"and yet I hail it as a happy omen: even superstition shows how deeply religious feelings are rooted in the heart."

"Yes, **while** we bear about us the fearful mysteries of our mortal **natures**, the strongest of us will sometimes fall into the weakness of **what** is called superstition. Yet I am not a skeptic in my strong, a Catholic in my weak moments, though I have known many who were. This cross my mother fastened around my neck the day before I embarked for America, and entreated me to keep it as a talisman until we **met** again; I consented to gratify her, and I have learned to annex a childish, if not a superstitious value to it. Will you now so far indulge a foolish fancy of mine, as to consent to wear it for my sake, until we meet again? I should then feel sure that you would sometimes think of me."

Ellen colored deeply, as she said:

"There needs no such token of remembrance; and this, too, would be violating your promise to your mother."

"Oh, no, you are my tutelary saint, my good angel; worn around your neck, it would have double efficacy for my preservation. Surely, Ellen, it can not be that you have a holy horror of a Popish relic, such as Mrs. Herbert, I doubt not, would entertain. You will not refuse to grant a parting request of so trifling a nature? What importance can you annex to it?"

Ellen felt distressed and confused at the idea of affixing a stronger, **tenderer** meaning to this request of Edgar's, than it was intended to convey; and replied, with some **hesitation** and embarrassment:

"A promise, to a mother especially, however trifling in itself, should be kept."

"This is the **only** speech I ever heard you make, Ellen, like your aunt Herbert. The only use in keeping a promise such as this would be to gratify my mother; now, she will never know, in the first place, that I have violated it; and, in the next, it will be no violation even of the letter of the promise, because I only promised to keep the cross. I did not say I would wear it constantly."

Ellen knew not how longer to refuse a request apparently so

trifling, and silently extended her hand to receive the cross, though her varying color and trembling hand betrayed her internal agitation. Edgar thanked her by a look more expressive than words, and for a moment Ellen felt as if her compliance had involved more than she intended; but this feeling was instantly checked when she recollected that only a few minutes since, Edgar had spoken as if the time was probably not far distant when they should part forever.

CHAPTER XXIV.

And is he gone?—on sudden solitude,
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
'Twas but an instant past—and here he stood!
And now?—without the portal's porch she rush'd,
And then, at length, her tears in freedom gush'd;
Big, bright, and fast, unknown to her, they fell;
But still her lips refused to send—"farewell!"
For in that word—that fatal word—howe'er,
We promise—~~hope~~—believe—there breathes despair.

BYRON.

It had been arranged that Edgar should set out very early on his journey the following morning, and breakfast at Windsor, which was five or six miles distant from Woodbourne, and very near the road on which his direct route lay. He requested, half-gayly, half-seriously, that no one would rise in the morning to bid him farewell, as there was nothing he so much detested as leaving-taking; but as they were about to separate for the night, he extended his hand to each, and with a tone of cheerful kindness, bade them good-night. Ellen was the last to whom he offered his hand; and as she was standing near a window, apart from the rest of the group, he had an opportunity of whispering, unobserved, "Forgive my weakness, dear Ellen; I can not bid you farewell, even though I trust my absence will not be very long, without betraying emotion, which others might despise as weakness. Do not, in the duties and interests of home, forget one, who, however unworthy he may be, can never forget you. Good-night; I will not say farewell! Think sometimes of me."

He felt that Ellen's hand was cold, as he pressed it in his own; he saw the tear tremble in her eye; he heard the sweet voice falter, as she said, "Good-night; may God bless you!" and was satisfied, that the pain she felt at his departure was almost as great as he could have wished.

When they were assembled at the breakfast-table next morning, all felt the vacuum made by Edgar's absence painfully, except Mrs. Herbert.

"Oh, how melancholy Edgar's chair looks," said Sophia, addressing herself to her sister, "does it not, Ellen?"

"You should rather say, Miss Sophia," said Mr. Walton, "how melancholy looking at Edgar's chair makes one feel! An inanimate object can scarcely be said, with propriety, to look melancholy, except, indeed, in the language of poetic license."

"Well, then," said Sophia, smiling, "how melancholy looking at Edgar's chair makes me feel!"

"You certainly look very melancholy," said William.

"Pshaw, brother, smiling is only a habit with me. I often smile when I feel most disturbed, as you may remember I did, two or three mornings ago, when you tore my prettiest muslin apron, by your kind attempts to disentangle it from a brier."

"I think the misfortune was at least as much owing to your impatience as to my awkwardness. Don't you remember I could not prevail on you to stand still for a minute."

"Oh, no, I don't remember that. I only know if Edgar had been my knight on the occasion, my apron would have escaped unhurt."

"I certainly yield the palm to Edgar, in all matters where grace and gallantry are concerned," said William; "and I make the concession, too, without the slightest humiliation: as in these points I consider him unrivaled."

"Well, certainly, it is wonderful how people differ," said Mrs. Herbert. "Without meaning to compliment—which I am sure, William, you know me too well to suspect—I must really say, that I think your manners infinitely superior to Mr. Edgar Clifford's."

"I am happy to hear it," said William, with a smile; "but I am afraid, my dear aunt, you will not make many converts to your opinion."

"Yes, all that prefer the essentials of good manners to the mere foppery and tinsel of fashion, will agree with me. What say you, Ellen?"

Ellen colored a little, as she replied, "I certainly do not think, in the essentials of good manners, as you express it, William is at all surpassed by Edgar; but in grace and polish, Edgar is superior; which is not to be wondered at, when we consider that he has been educated in the highest circles of the first city in the world."

"I am far from making this admission. How often I have seen Mr. Edgar Clifford guilty of what I should term real ill-breeding; how often I have seen him affect to suppress a yawn, when I ~~have~~ been conversing on the most serious subjects, or assume an air of total abstraction, or whisper some nonsense to Ellen or Sophia."

An arch smile played on Sophia's lips at this accusation, which Mrs. Herbert observed, and instantly inquired, "What amuses you, Sophia?"

"Oh, I don't know; I am not particularly amused. You know I smile from habit."

"It is a very unmeaning habit, then," said Mrs. Herbert, gravely, "and one which you can not too soon correct."

"Come," said Sophia, willing to change the subject, "let us take a drive to Windsor this morning and see Olivia; every thing looks melancholy and stupid here, and a little exercise will do us all good."

Ellen and Mrs. Herbert willingly acceded to the proposal. Mrs. Herbert wished to give little Charles an airing for the benefit of his health, and Ellen was glad to change the scene for awhile, for she thought with Sophia, that every thing looked very melancholy and stupid, and felt almost incapable of resuming her regular routine of employment. William declined accompanying them, notwithstanding Sophia's earnest entreaties and reproaches.

"Well, I don't know what is the matter with you," she said, after exhausting her rhetoric in vain to persuade him to go with them; "I thought once you liked Olivia almost as well as you did Ellen and myself; but you are either fickle, which I had never supposed, or these horrid political disagreements with Mr. Granville have estranged you from the family. For my part, I

would not give up a friend for all the rights of all the nations in the world, or for all the political principles that—”

“Come, Sophia, I want you in my room,” said Ellen, gently drawing her toward her by the hand, for she perceived how painfully William felt the subject on which their conversation had turned.

“I have a great mind not to go,” said Sophia, laughing; “I know you only want to stop my tongue, because you can not bear that William should be scolded. But you look so beseechingly, I must not refuse you, as, to do you justice, you never refuse any request of mine.”

So saying, she left the room with Ellen; and, after Mrs. Herbert had wrapped up little Charles sufficiently to guard him against the raw air of a chilly spring morning, they set out for Windsor. The playful gentleness of Ellen’s manner, and her unwearied patience with children, made her a universal favorite with them. Charles knew his mother would lecture, and Sophia would tease him; and as soon as they had taken their seats in the carriage, he placed himself in Ellen’s lap, and coaxingly twining his little fingers around hers, said, “I am going to ride in your lap, Ellen.”

“You might at least say, Cousin Ellen, Charles,” said Mrs. Herbert, “and ask her if she will be so good as to let you ride in her lap.”

Mrs. Herbert’s children had been accustomed to habits of implicit obedience, and Charles immediately said, with a pretty air of gravity, “Cousin Ellen, will you be so good as to let me ride in your lap?”

Ellen assented, and gave him an affectionate kiss, while the child looked around triumphantly at his mother, and said, “I knew cousin Ellen loved me to ride with her.”

Ellen perceived that Olivia’s countenance wore an air of disappointment, when she perceived that William was not with them. It was hard indeed for Olivia to believe that he was indeed estranged, and had not pride restrained her, she longed to inquire of Ellen the cause of this alteration. But Olivia, though possessing stronger affections than Mr. Granville, had

scarcely less pride of character; and the very consciousness, too, of the strength of her affection for William, made her fearful of betraying how deeply her happiness was involved in his conduct toward her. She would rather have died, than that any one, especially William, should have known the real state of her feelings toward him, when there was no appearance of his requiting her affection. She assumed, therefore, an air of more than usual cheerfulness to disguise her disappointment; and began, in a lively manner, to express her regret at losing Edgar Clifford's society. "Indeed, I begin to think, too," she said, glancing beneath her eyelashes at Ellen, "that the poor fellow has left his heart behind."

"With whom has he left that invaluable possession?" said Mrs. Herbert, slightly compressing her lips with a scornful expression of countenance.

"Not with me, I fear," said Olivia, laughing. "But guess; let us see if our conjectures are similar."

Ellen felt conscious that her color changed; and this very consciousness gave a still deeper hue to her cheek, especially as she felt, rather than saw, Mrs. Herbert's glance of severe scrutiny fixed upon her. She immediately began to play with Charles's curls, for he still maintained his station in her lap, and attempted to enter into some playful conversation with him.

"It ought to be a matter of complete indifference to me, with whom he has left his heart, as it seems very improbable that any woman, educated in strict religious principles, could bestow her heart in return upon a complete man of the world, an infidel," said Mrs. Herbert, with an air of grave displeasure.

"Indeed, I never thought for an instant of the possibility of Edgar's falling in love with any of us; I supposed, from the very first of our acquaintance, it was a thing entirely out of the question. I dare say, Lord Fitz-Claire has had some match arranged for him ever since he was two years old. I don't think he is at all in love with me, and yet I think he likes me quite as well as he does either of you, ladies," said Sophia, nodding her head, with a smile, at Ellen and Olivia. "It is true, he likes better to read with Ellen, because her taste and knowledge

in literary matters is superior to mine ; but, on the whole, I don't think he prefers her to me."

Olivia shook her head, and said, playfully : " My father is quite right ; you know he always says Ellen is entirely devoid of that idle curiosity for which other women are so remarkable ; you see she will not even guess who has possession of Mr. Clifford's heart."

" You know I don't pretend to any extraordinary penetration on such subjects," said Ellen, with as much ease of manner as she could assume. She felt that it was necessary to say something, but did not very well know what it was she did say.

Olivia's quick eye immediately perceived that there was something painful to Ellen in the turn the conversation had taken ; this produced many surmises which had never before arisen in her mind ; but she did not wish to gratify her own curiosity at the expense of Ellen's feelings, and hastened to endeavor to divert Mrs. Herbert's attention from the subject by saying : " Well, I believe you are in the right, it is a subject scarcely worth guessing about, as it is one on which the most penetrating among us make strange mistakes ; so we will talk of something more profitable. Mrs. Herbert, can you give me a receipt for the delightful lemon pudding that was on your table, when we dined with you last Thursday ? I have tried, in vain, since to imitate it, and papa gave me positive orders to get your receipt exactly."

Mrs. Herbert immediately complied with the request, and insisted that Olivia should forthwith write the receipt from her dictation, as things that were put off, she said, were very apt to be forgotten altogether ; it was, therefore, best to obey Mr. Granville at once.

Olivia began to write accordingly, and succeeded in engaging Mrs. Herbert, for the present, completely. She perceived Ellen looked relieved, and she was indeed relieved and grateful, though she knew her friends too well to think that their investigations would stop here, and her heart foreboded much that would be painful and unpleasant would arise from Olivia's suggestions ; though she scarcely knew how or why, or could herself analyze the mixed emotions they had excited in her bosom. With an

undefined dread lest the conversation should revert to the channel from which it had been turned by Olivia's address, Ellen seized the first opportunity to propose returning home. When they had exchanged farewell greetings, Sophia reproached Olivia for visiting them now so seldom, and entreated her to return with them. Olivia shook her head, "I can not indeed, Sophia, go with you to-day; there are various little matters which require my attention at home. Mrs. Herbert, I am sure, will understand and approve this excuse."

"Though I am sorry to lose the pleasure of your society," said Mrs. Herbert, "I must confess that I approve highly of the systematic discharge of every domestic duty; however minute they may appear, they make up the sum of the comfort of life."

"Pshaw!" said Sophia, half pettishly, "you can not impose upon me, Olivia, by such flimsy excuses. You do not love Woodbourne as you used to do."

The crimson which dyed Olivia's cheek showed how deeply she felt this reproach, though she forced a smile, and said, in a gay tone: "I appeal to Ellen if your reproaches are just. You have not lost your confidence in my affection, I am sure, have you, Ellen?"

"No, indeed," said Ellen, with a tone of tenderness which touched Olivia's proud heart; "no, I can never doubt one of my dearest, my earliest friends; though Sophia can not regret more deeply than I do that we see you so seldom at Woodbourne." Ellen cast down her eyes as she concluded this speech, for she knew what was passing in Olivia's heart, which swelled at these words.

Ellen then gently kissing her cheek, once more pressed her hand in both her own, and bade her adieu. Olivia saw that her eyes were wet with tears, and it was with the utmost difficulty that she restrained her own emotion. She looked after the carriage a few minutes as it rolled away, then hastily brushing off the tears which flowed unbidden down her cheeks—"How can I," said she, half aloud, "be so mean, so foolish? How could I ever have supposed he loved me? What vanity! Does Ellen know the secret of my heart, does she pity me? horrible thought!

or does she regret for his sake also, that his heart is alienated, if, indeed, it was ever mine? How cold, how strange, how heartless his conduct seems! And yet, I have seen him capable of the noblest, the tenderest emotions. But henceforth he shall be to me as a mere common acquaintance, and I will remember my past folly only to execrate it." As she formed this resolution again, for the hundredth time, she rose, and throwing a thick shawl around her, walked with a firm step and lofty bearing, of which she was herself unconscious, down the avenue which led to the house, to meet her father, whom she saw slowly returning from his morning's walk.

"You have had a lonely morning, my daughter."

"Oh, no; the family from Woodbourne have just left me."

Mr. Granville's eye lighted up with an expression of pleasure, as he thought, from the manner in which Olivia expressed herself, that William had been one of the party; but he scorned to ask the question directly, and therefore said: "You should have sent a messenger in search of me, you know the course of my morning walks so well. I am sorry to have missed Mr. Clifford's visit."

Olivia instantly saw his mistake, and hastily replied—"Oh, I only meant the girls and Mrs. Herbert were with me."

"Umph!" said Mr. Granville, somewhat disconcerted; "well, it is a matter of no consequence. I only wished that all due respect and politeness should be shown to Mr. Richard Clifford. I dare say we were both better employed in minding our own affairs, than in paying or receiving visits."

Olivia hastened to turn the conversation into some other channel; she could not bear to hear her father speak disparagingly of the Cliffords, though she perfectly well knew that the irritation of his feelings arose from wounded affection and mortified pride; and she often felt emotions within her own breast, which enabled her to sympathize with his. They were, both of them, however, too proud to have acknowledged the disappointment of cherished hopes, which made William Clifford's estrangement a source of such deep regret and mortification to Mr. Granville, and to Olivia of anxious perplexity and unhappiness. It is true, she struggled

hard to subdue her regret, but she felt this almost impossible, especially as the very doubts and surmises which William Clifford's strange course of conduct suggested, were so well calculated to make him the frequent, we will not say the constant subject of her thoughts ; for this state of mind can not by any possibility exist, except in a heroine or a maniac, and Olivia, fortunately for herself, was neither.

CHAPTER XXV.

It bears its burden ; but my heart ! will it
Sustain that which you lay on it, mother ?

The Deformed Transformed.

ELLEN strove successfully during their return to Woodbourne to engage Charles in playful prattle, knowing if it were possible that any thing could divert Mrs. Herbert's attention from an idea after it had become fixed, it would be Charles's lively sallies ; but she saw too plainly the cloud was still lowering on her aunt's brow. Hitherto, she had never had a shadow of concealment with her friends, as to any thing that related to herself personally, and she could scarcely comprehend why she shrunk with that fear which should only be allied to guilt, from an investigation of her feelings toward Edgar, or from inquiries as to the nature of the conversations that had passed between them. Upon reviewing her own conduct, she felt that there was nothing in it really to blame, and yet she was conscious that many speeches Edgar had made to her, bore a double interpretation, and that many of them would appear to Mrs. Herbert to be plain declarations of love ; and disapprobation, she knew, would be but a light word to express the stern displeasure her aunt would feel at her having received them without the most positive discouragement. And yet, upon the severest scrutiny of her past conduct, she could not recollect any occasion on which she could, without an appearance of vanity, affectation, or unkindness, have answered Edgar's professions of affection, as if she considered them dictated by a feeling warmer than friendship. It was true, there was often something in his looks and manner, which had excited in her mind suspicions which she feared to analyze ; but almost immediately afterward a total change of manner, or some speech of a contrary import, would obliterate the impression. She had never suffered herself to dwell on the possibility of a union with Edgar ;

the obstacles to such an event appeared to be insurmountable. Lord Fitz-Claire's ambitious and worldly minded views, she knew, could never be reconciled to an alliance with a girl brought up in provincial simplicity, in a remote colony, considered almost as barbarians by the noble and fashionable, or with equal propriety, we might say, at least on this subject, ignorant and prejudiced court of St. James. Then the impossibility of leaving her father, and, above all, the gloomy infidelity of Edgar's opinions, must place an impassable barrier between them. Even if Edgar had loved her with more than a brother's love, of which she was very doubtful, she was very far from feeling sure that he would seek her hand, as she knew the objections to their union must appear strong to him. Many speeches now occurred to her, which he had made on different occasions, half reproachfully, half playfully, that seemed to her plainly to express a conviction that she did not think him worthy of her love. Her reflections became every moment sadder and more bewildered. It would be impossible, under all existing circumstances, that she could marry Edgar, even had he declared his love; and yet to think of parting with him forever was insupportably painful. She tried in vain to banish the subject entirely from her thoughts, and take refuge and consolation in the uncertainty of the future; but it recurred again and again in a thousand forms, and she sat absorbed in meditation, until she was aroused by Mrs. Herbert's entrance into her apartment.

Ellen looked up, and perceived Mrs. Herbert's cold and scrutinizing glance fixed upon her; she blushed deeply, with a feeling almost as if she had been surprised in a wrong action; and rising hastily, placed a chair near the fire for Mrs. Herbert, and began to talk about their visit and Olivia, without knowing very well what she was saying.

"Really, Ellen," said Mrs. Herbert, "your wits seem to be so much given to wandering, that if I did not suppose it impossible, I should say you were in love!"

Ellen felt the blood mount to her cheek, and her eye sank beneath Mrs. Herbert's, though she tried to say, with an appearance of unconcern: "There are so many causes that may make

the wits wander, mine especially, that we need not resort to love for an explanation."

"Yes, there are, certainly, many causes; and I would rather refer your wanderings of mind to **any** other cause, as I know no one at present who could be supposed capable of calling forth such a sentiment in your heart without a violation of principle on your part—indeed I might say, without degradation of character. But why are you thus moved? I have not accused you of being in love."

"I am always moved at the displeasure of my friends, even when it is causeless and unjust," replied Ellen, and her eyes, in spite of herself, filled with tears.

"Unjust!" repeated Mrs. Herbert, in an accent of grave displeasure. "This is rather a strange, and not a very respectful epithet applied by you to me. This needless ebullition of temper is well calculated to confirm, rather than to destroy suspicion."

Fortunately for Ellen, the conversation between Mrs. Herbert and herself was here interrupted by the sound of the dinner-bell, and she was thankful for a reprieve; but she felt sure that Mrs. Herbert was determined that, sooner or later, she would come to an *éclaircissement* on the subject of Edgar Clifford, and now carefully avoided being alone with her.

Mrs. Herbert's suspicions were now fairly aroused; and to divert her from a point on which she had once fixed her mind, was an event which had never been known to happen; and Ellen was conscious that the drawn sword, suspended by a hair, must sooner or later descend upon her head.

A few days after the conversation we have related, Ellen, Mrs. Herbert and Sophia were sitting together engaged in needle-work, Sophia running on in her usual thoughtless strain, Mrs. Herbert preserving a grave and almost unbroken silence, and Ellen forcing herself every now and then to say something, that she might appear cheerful and easy, for she *felt* that Mrs. Herbert was looking at her.

Charles had seated himself as usual in Ellen's lap; and with the natural instinct which enables children often to read more

clearly the expression of the countenance than older and wiser people, perceived that something was the matter with his favorite. He began gently to stroke her cheek, and put his arms around her neck, when his fingers touched a ribbon, and, before Ellen could prevent the motion, he drew forth the black ribbon with Edgar's cross attached to it, saying, "Oh, cousin Ellen, what a pretty thing!—how it shines! May I have it?"

If Beelzebub had appeared, *in propria persona*, with cloven-foot and horns, Mrs. Herbert could scarcely have looked more dismayed than at the cross which Charles innocently held up for general admiration; but the blush which dyed Ellen's whole face and neck with the deepest crimson did not escape Charles's eye; and he instantly said, "What is the matter, cousin Ellen? Are you angry with little Charles?"

"No, my dear," said Ellen, and attempted at the same time to replace the cross; but Sophia eagerly begged to examine it, which she could not refuse, though she would rather have granted any other request. Mrs. Herbert's indignation and surprise were too strong for words.

"I did not suspect you of being a Catholic, Ellen," said Sophia. "I suppose Edgar has converted you; though, indeed, I should not have supposed him a proselyte to religion of any kind?"

"Does wearing a cross make a Catholic?" said Ellen, vainly attempting to speak with composure.

"Yes, when one does it secretly, it is a strong presumptive evidence. Is it not, aunt Herbert?"

"This is no subject for idle jesting," said Mrs. Herbert, in a tone of indignant solemnity. "Charles, get out of Ellen's lap, and play in the parlor."

Charles saw that he had, somehow or other, involved Ellen in a scrape, though he could not comprehend the cause of offense; and, kissing her fondly, he whispered, "Don't be sorry, cousin Ellen, I a'n't angry with you!"

"Go, when I bid you, child!" repeated Mrs. Herbert, in a tone not to be disobeyed; and Charles instantly quitted the room.

"And now, Ellen Clifford, my duty as your aunt, my duty to your deceased mother, and above all, my duty as a Christian,

compels me to forego my usual custom of refraining from inquiry into any matter which I perceive is intended to be concealed. I demand how that relic of Popery, that symbol of idolatrous superstition, came into your possession, and for what purpose you wear it?"

Moses himself, who is said to have been the meekest man upon earth, could scarcely have suppressed every feeling of resentment upon being thus addressed in such a tone and manner. Ellen paused a few minutes to compose her disordered feelings and thoughts ere she replied. She knew not what to say to allay the rising storm; but equivocation was, of all things, most foreign to her nature; and though she knew her reply would rather increase than diminish Mrs. Herbert's anger, she said: "The cross is Edgar Clifford's; and I have worn it at his request, as a token of friendship."

"Friendship!" repeated Mrs. Herbert, in a tone of ineffable scorn; and she felt for some minutes totally incapable of uttering another syllable.

"It is strange, Ellen," said Sophia, "that you should never have mentioned this, nor have shown the cross to me!"

"That she should have worn it at all is so strange, that I can scarcely wonder at her concealing it," said Mrs. Herbert. "What can I understand from your thus wearing and receiving this symbol of idolatrous superstition, as a love-token, from the hands of an infidel?"

Ellen felt herself incapable of replying; mingled sentiments of injured pride, of wounded affection, of natural shame and resentment, choked her utterance; and she then remained silent.

"Am I, then, unworthy of an answer, Miss Clifford?"

"Why should I answer such accusations?—have I ever deserved to be spoken to thus?"

"Your own conscience must answer this question. A few days ago, I would not have believed what I have now seen with my eyes, and heard with my ears. You have given no explanation of the fact; you have attempted no excuse; but have shown by the angry emotion you have displayed that you are conscious of having acted wrong."

"The fact requires no explanation," said Ellen; "I told you the cross was Edgar Clifford's, and that I wore it as a token of friendship."

"Then, why *did* you seek concealment? Friendship seeks no concealment; and why was it not publicly given?—and why was a cross the symbol of friendship? I was not aware that Mr. Edgar Clifford was so devotional; but I believe there is not a more common union than that of Papistry and Infidelity."

"Edgar has lived in our family as a brother; our terms of intimacy warranted my wearing a token of friendship from him; nor do I attach any superstitious horror to a cross: I had rather wear a hundred crosses than judge a fellow-creature hardly."

"I can scarcely believe that I am listening to Ellen Clifford—to one whom I had thought so blameless, so religious, so shrinkingly delicate. I see that I must not presume to say a word against Mr. Edgar Clifford, whom that deep blush and conscious look plainly proclaim you look upon in the light of a brother. I see it is in vain to expect candor and confidence from you on this subject; nor can I wonder that you should feel shame and reluctance in confessing an unworthy attachment, clandestinely—"

This accusation instantly dried the tears which had risen, despite all Ellen's efforts to restrain them, to her eyes, as she said: "I should be wanting in self-respect to answer such accusations; I might, perhaps, forget myself were I to attempt to do so. I can not continue a conversation such as this!" Then, without giving Mrs. Herbert time to reply, she hastily withdrew.

The voice of censure, even from indifferent persons, was naturally very painful to Ellen; from her friends, insupportably so; but words of unkindness from those she loved sank like iron into her soul. She had so long, too, been unaccustomed to them—for the spotlessness of her conduct, the invariable kindness and forbearance which marked her course toward others, had been such, that few occasions had ever presented themselves on which her friends felt disposed to blame her; and then their reproofs were not of a nature to make a deep or painful impression upon her;—now they fell so strangely, so painfully on her ear, that she scarcely knew how to trust the evidence of her own senses.

Mrs. Herbert's looks, manner, and words, pursued her ; and what added ten-fold to the depth of her distress and mortification, was, that Sophia had said not one word in her behalf, but had appeared rather disposed to join in her condemnation.

Still, unkind and unjust as she felt this attack to have been, conscience whispered, with a still, small voice, not to be silenced, that she had permitted feelings, which she should have crushed in their birth, to obtain a fearful mastery in her bosom. Her emotions were so mixed and painful in their nature that she felt utterly unable to understand or to analyze them ; and she remained long in a painful and perplexing reverie—a reverie the most hopeless, because there was no course of action that could result from it, which would at all benefit her situation.

Mrs. Herbert, too, was not without her share of pain, though resentment, and a settled determination to bring Ellen to repentance, prevented her showing any symptom of relenting, or in any degree softening the harshness of her censures. Sophia had always looked upon it as an impossible thing that Edgar should fall in love with Ellen or herself. She knew enough of Lord Fitz-Clare to believe that he would form ambitious views for a son so gifted by nature and fortune as Edgar Clifford ; it was more than probable that Edgar had formed the same—indeed she had sometimes heard him speak of the advantages of fashion, of wealth, of aristocratic institutions, in a manner that convinced her he would never think of forming an alliance in Virginia. Ellen's visible confusion and distress, and the discovery of the cross, perplexed and somewhat shook this belief. She thought it strange, that Ellen should never have mentioned the circumstance ; and, moreover, felt vexed at what appeared to be a want of confidence in her. She would not have attached much importance to wearing a cross given or lent by Edgar Clifford : but then, why should Ellen not have mentioned it to her ?”

CHAPTER XXVI.

Was't possible ? Hadst thou the heart, my father,
Hadst thou the heart to drive it to such lengths,
With cold, premeditated purpose ?

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

MEANTIME Edgar Clifford was pursuing his journey, which it then required almost as many days as it now takes hours to perform. During his long and lonely rides, Ellen's image accompanied him ; her sweet voice, her lovely face, her playful sallies of imagination, her generous and disinterested feelings, and, above all, the thousand marks of affection toward himself, proceeding, as he could scarcely doubt, from an interest warmer than friendship in her heart, arose to his mind. His memory delighted to dwell upon those scenes ; and indistinct visions of love, of hope, and joy, often beguiled him in the enchanted region of fancy ; but his was not the nature which could enjoy unmixed pleasure in those reveries and visions. These sweet waters could not flow uninterruptedly from a bitter fountain ; and such, indeed, was Edgar's heart—early polluted with worldliness, ambition, and the gloomy views of infidelity. As Edgar was eminently gifted by nature with talents, with ambition, with personal advantages, and a peculiar fascination of manner, Lord Fitz-Clare regarded him with more than usual paternal pride, and anxiety that he should be so educated as to fit him for attaining the worldly distinction to which those gifts entitled him. He often regretted that nature should have been so mistaken as to have lavished these rare endowments on the second rather than the elder son, and wished it had been possible to exchange them, and that Edgar might have been the rightful heir to his title and noble estates. This, however, being clearly not possible, he resolved to spare no pains to bestow upon him such an education as was best fitted to develop his talents, to enable him to take a distinguished place in society ; and he did not doubt that his uncom-

mon advantages would secure for him a wealthy and noble alliance. He sought to impress upon Edgar's mind the absolute necessity of this step, and endeavored to convince him that love was but an idle delusion, a sentiment unworthy to actuate reasonable men in the great pursuits of life, or to turn aside his footsteps from the goal, where mammon and ambition displayed their glittering prizes.

It is true, that the better and nobler impulses of Edgar's nature sometimes revolted against the doctrines and precepts of his father ; and glimpses of purer and more elevated happiness presented themselves to his imagination, than mines of wealth, or all the hollow applause of the world, could offer. But no one understood better than Lord Fitz-Clare, how to apply an extinguisher to these glimmering and uncertain lights.

" His tongue

Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason."

His cool sarcasm, joined to the ingenious sophistry of an almost irresistible eloquence, made him the most dangerous of tempters ; and Edgar felt more and more strongly the baneful effects of his influence, and became more and more inclined to worship the false gods of his father's idolatry. But the temptations of society, were so seducing and so various, to one who was formed like Edgar to shine and please in every circle in which he moved, that despite the motives of ambition and worldly advancement, he was drawn almost unconsciously, and to him it appeared irresistibly, into the vortex of dissipation. Debts were contracted, which he durst not avow to Lord Fitz-Clare, and intimacies were formed, which he knew, would be most displeasing to him ; and which he therefore, as much as possible, endeavored to conceal from his knowledge. Lord Fitz-Clare's character was not one to excite confidence, and Edgar learned to dissimulate almost as skillfully as his father.

The day, however, came—the dreadful day when concealment was no longer possible ; for debt, like murder, **will out**. There was something in the cool displeasure of Lord Fitz-Clare's manner, and the cutting irony of his remarks, when he was offended,

peculiarly galling to Edgar's proud and sensitive disposition. Lord Fitz-Claire was determined to turn Edgar's imprudence to his advantage; and, after having made him feel sufficiently the weight of his displeasure, he promised to pay off his debts, and forgive his past offenses, if he would break off his present dangerous intimacies, and comply with his better judgment in paying his addresses to Lady Julia Somerset. He added, that with Edgar's graces and accomplishments, he had no doubt of his being a successful suitor; and could not imagine, that he would hesitate to accept a proposal, so pleasing to his father, and so advantageous to himself.

Now Lady Julia was a beauty and an heiress; and had manifested such decided symptoms of partiality toward Edgar, that he did not feel the slightest doubt of the success of his suit, could he prevail on himself to urge it. But his inclination revolted strongly against the measure, and still more strongly against being thus compelled into marriage; and he requested Lord Fitz-Claire, to allow him a few days to reflect on his proposition, as the consequences it involved were sufficiently serious to require some consideration.

Lord Fitz-Claire assented to this demand, and at the expiration of the allotted time, he was surprised at Edgar's declaration, that he found it utterly impossible to overcome his repugnance to a union with Lady Julia. He did not deny the advantages of the alliance, nor the attractions of the lady, nor even her favorable disposition toward himself: yet, strange and perverse as this might appear, this very circumstance only increased his averseness to the union. If he should marry from interested motives, he confessed that he should prefer a wife who would not torment and reproach him by an exacting fondness, which he should feel it impossible to return; and which he feared, from a knowledge of the perversity of his own disposition, would excite weariness and disgust, rather than any corresponding sentiment in his own heart.

Lord Fitz-Claire's secret soul responded to the force of his son's objection; his own experience had taught him how little happiness was to be hoped for in such a marriage as he proposed

to Edgar ; but, he had no idea, of admitting that there was truth and strength in what he said. He knew that nothing could be more advantageous to his son, in a worldly point of view, than forming such an alliance, and determined to combat the weakness of mere feeling, by the coolness and strength of reason. But he found Edgar possessed much of his own determination of character, combined with a gentleness of manner, an apparent persuadableness, which would lead even an acute observer, to suppose that he possessed more than ordinary facility of disposition. Though his opposition irritated and offended Lord Fitz-Claire, still he could not help respecting him more for it, as there was nothing which he more heartily despised than a too yielding character, though no one was readier than himself to take advantage of such a turn of mind in another, to move it to his own purposes.

"Very well," said Lord Fitz-Claire, after listening with the most polite composure to Edgar's declaration, and without uttering a syllable of interruption, "very well, if you choose to sacrifice advantages of fortune, of noble alliance, such as may never again present themselves—and at a time, too, when they have become peculiarly necessary—for whimsical and romantic objections, I can not force you to take the lofty and brilliant position in society, for which I once believed nature had destined you, and for which I have sought to fit you by sparing neither trouble nor expense to give you the education and accomplishments which would adorn such a station. You have had full leisure to reflect and determine. You say your mind is fully made up. Expostulation would then be vain and useless ; but, you doubtless recollect the alternative. How then do you propose to discharge debts to a more considerable amount than you can reasonably hope to pay, even by the strictest economy and privations of years ?"

Edgar had hoped that his father would relent, and this declaration dismayed him ; economy, privation—horrible words, horrible even in sound, how dreadful then in reality ! He paused, and considered for a moment ; but to be thus forced into a marriage, which he every moment disliked more and more, since he

found that it was literally selling himself, to be disposed of at Lord Fitz-Claire's pleasure, was too repugnant to every feeling of pride and honor. He therefore replied, with as much calmness and gentleness as he could assume, "that he must consent to pay the penalty of his own imprudence, however hard it might be; and, that if his father would assist in discharging the debts, which he was unable to pay from his own resources, and in which he felt his honor involved, he would consent to retire to the Continent, or even to Virginia, for whatever period Lord Fitz-Claire might consider his banishment necessary.

Lord Fitz-Claire never descended to useless expostulation or persuasion. He saw that Edgar was fully resolved not to pay his addresses to Lady Julia; he therefore determined to make him feel the folly of his choice. He saw, too, many benefits that would result from an absence of two or three years, in breaking off dangerous intimacies, and in forming new habits. A bright idea occurred to him. The delicacy of Edgar's constitution had always been a source of solicitude to his father; as he feared, lest the tendency he had observed in his health to a pulmonary affection, might develop itself in some fatal and incurable form of consumption. He suddenly recollected his brother in Virginia, whose image had not for a long time before visited his brain; and he knew Richard Clifford well enough, to be sure that his son would meet the kindest reception, and entertainment in his mansion. Two or three years' residence in Virginia, might be the means of improving Edgar's health, his fortune, and of forming habits of industry and enterprise. Moreover, it would be an expiation for his extravagance, disobedience, and folly, in obstinately refusing brilliant and solid advantages, which might never again offer themselves. This sojourn in a remote colony, and almost uncivilized state of society, as he imagined it to be, would render Edgar more sensible of the value of wealth, rank, and all the enjoyments of polished society; he was sure that he should, upon his return, find him a more willing disciple, and he did not doubt that Edgar's talents, conversational powers, personal and mental attractions, would secure him an advantageous alliance whenever he chose to seek it.

It did not occur to Lord Fitz-Clare, as a possibility, that Edgar could fall in love with one of his cousins, as he supposed they must be destitute of graces and accomplishments, from the situation in which they had been educated. It was scarcely to be supposed, in a remote province, which had so recently been inhabited by wild and savage tribes, that ladies could be found, with minds and manners of an order to make a favorable impression on a mind of taste so exquisite as Edgar's, refined almost to fastidiousness, and a heart which had hitherto shown itself impenetrable to the combined influences of high birth, beauty, and fashion.

Lord Fitz-Clare accordingly, after a few minutes, assented with much coolness to Edgar's proposition, saying that, for many weighty reasons, he should prefer a residence of two or three years in Virginia to one on the Continent.

Edgar stared; he could scarcely believe his father would enforce an exile, which in his imagination was scarcely a less total banishment from all the comforts of civilized life, than a sojourn in Siberia. He repeated Lord Fitz-Clare's words, with an air of unfeigned astonishment, to be sure that he had heard them aright.

"Yes, those were my words," replied his father, whose calmness increased proportionably with Edgar's agitation; "you know I have a brother residing in Virginia."

"I think I have an indistinct recollection of having heard you allude to such a relation, on one or two occasions."

"I did not, until this moment, suppose that his existence would be of any more importance to you than that of the Dey of Algiers. But it occurs to me now, since you prefer exile for an indefinite period, to wealth, beauty, and rank with Lady Julia, that some good may be drawn even from this plan, which certainly appears on the face of things, rather unpromising. My brother, Richard Clifford, is settled in one of the fairest portions of the New World; and I have been informed, both from his own letters and from other sources, that he has become a successful and extensive agriculturist." A smile of ineffable disdain curled Edgar's lip, but he did not attempt to interrupt Lord Fitz-Clare,

but listened with an air of provoking and imperturbable attention.

"The lands in this region of country are said to be very fertile, and with a small investment of capital, under judicious management, yield large returns. I could furnish you with a sum of money sufficient to make a profitable speculation, and under my brother's superintendence, and with his assistance, I have no doubt you may find it a source of future wealth, as I do not think you can well dispense with riches, whatever you may think of it. Richard Clifford is just one of those good, easy men, that would make you feel his house your home, and I will write to him to prepare for your reception."

"I am much obliged to you, sir, for your kind offers, but really, I fear the investment of capital, which you are so good as to intend making for my advantage, would be thrown away, for I think the natural bent of my genius is not in the agricultural line; and my total ignorance, too, would disqualify me, unless aided by Triptolemus himself."

"I am willing to run the risk of making the investment; and as to the natural bent of your genius, and your total ignorance, these are mere trivial objections. If we have genius we may give it any bent we please; the will to do so is all that is necessary; and your present ignorance does not disqualify you from gaining whatever knowledge is necessary, and you will find a competent adviser in these matters in your uncle, who without being a second Triptolemus, possesses sufficient skill to assist and direct your efforts. The alternative, you recollect, was proposed by yourself."

Edgar bit his lip with vexation, as he replied: "I recollect it perfectly, sir, and will abide by your decision, even if it should be to go to Siberia, that I may feel my own imprudence and folly as bitterly as I deserve to do. We are both well aware that I can not pay my debts from my own resources: most of them, as a man of honor, I feel compelled to pay without farther delay, and must therefore consent to your own terms."

"Your own terms would be rather the most accurate expression, but we will not dispute about words. I will make arrange-

ments, as soon as possible, to comply with my part of the agreement."

"And I," said Edgar, "will embark immediately for Siberia or Virginia, whichever you may prefer."

"Since you are so good as to leave it to me," continued Lord Fitz-Clare, with immovable composure, "I should prefer Virginia, but there is no need for such precipitation; we must make first some necessary arrangements for your benefit. I must raise the funds for the land investment, and write to my brother Richard to insure you a favorable reception."

"As you please, sir," replied Edgar, who felt that at this moment he could not trust himself to utter another syllable.

"No, sir, it is as you please. This is the alternative you have chosen, it is still in your power to retract. It is not my wont to persuade those who have arrived at the age of reason, but I again offer the terms you have rejected."

"No, sir," replied Edgar, while the indignant blood mounted to his very forehead, "I thank you, my determination is made."

"Very well," said Lord Fitz-Clare, concealing under the same air of composure he had hitherto maintained, his real disappointment; "it is useless then to waste any farther words on the subject."

"Quite useless, sir." Edgar's pride enabled him to regain an appearance of calmness amounting almost to indifference. "Pray, may I ask, if you know, sir, whether Mr. Clifford married an English lady, or a native, as my future comfort is likely to be in some degree affected by it?"

Edgar was surprised at the deep and sudden shade which immediately passed over Lord Fitz-Clare's countenance. He paused for a minute before he replied, in a tone somewhat less calm than usual: "He married an English lady a short time previous to his departure from England; but she has been dead many years."

"Indeed, I am sorry for it; for the society of an English lady of any sort would, I dare say, be a treasure in Virginia. Do you know, sir, what sort of a lady she was?"

This question was evidently disagreeable, if not painful to Lord Fitz-Clare; a tide of buried feelings, and slumbering recol-

lections came over him with renewed and irresistible force, and he averted his face unconsciously as he replied: "Yes, we had some acquaintance with each other. She was a lady who possessed unusual strength of understanding, highly cultivated mind, fine manners, and uncommon personal beauty. But I can not see how these particulars can in any way interest you."

Edgar's surprise, curiosity, and interest were awakened at an appearance of emotion so unusual with Lord Fitz-Clare, and he would have pursued his inquiries if he could have found any plausible pretext for doing so; but as none occurred to him, he only replied: "I think it is not an unnatural subject of interest, especially as I suppose the characters of her children, if she left any, were somewhat formed by herself."

"They must have been too young, at the period of her death, to possess any thing like formed characters. But my brother once moved in the first circles of London, his education was liberal, and his abilities good, though he had some weak points about his character. I think it probable you will not find his family in so barbarous a state as you apprehend."

"Oh, I apprehend nothing, sir. I am quite prepared to paint my body, and deck myself with feathers, if it be necessary, to conform to the fashions of the New World. I dare say I shall soon be skillful enough to bring down the deer with my arrow, which my uncle and I will strip, while our fair cousins prepare it for our dinner."

Lord Fitz-Clare hoped that Edgar's resolution would fail him, when he saw all necessary arrangements making for his departure, but in vain. Edgar was deeply mortified and greatly offended at the apparent indifference with which his father regarded his banishment, and this strengthened his determination not to be compelled into marriage contrary to his own inclinations. He knew that his union with Lady Julia had always been a favorite plan of his father's, yet he could scarcely believe that this wish originated in any strong personal affection for himself, when he perceived with what inflexibility he doomed him to the horrors of a dreary exile for an indefinite period; but rather to gratify his own ambitious views, by aggrandizing his family and

strengthening his influence. He was well aware that Lord Fitz-Clare was proud of his talents, and anxious that he should distinguish himself; but for this he owed him no gratitude, especially when he recollected that his father would have relentlessly sacrificed his happiness to obtain this distinction.

Lady Fitz-Clare wept, and uttered the bitterest lamentations, when she heard that Edgar was to embark for America, and might be absent for years. She would have overwhelmed Lord Fitz-Clare with reproaches and entreaties; but long experience had taught her that both would be unavailing. Horrible visions of naked and cruel savages, of serpents, of wild beasts, of pestilential fevers, and every variety of danger and discomfort, which a disordered imagination, unaided by reason and unenlightened by knowledge, could present, arose to her mind. Lord Fitz-Clare and Edgar agreed not to acquaint Lady Fitz-Clare with the fact that all these horrors might be avoided, by Edgar's consenting to pay his addresses to Lady Julia. Lord Fitz-Clare wished to preserve silence on this subject, because he feared lest Lady Fitz-Clare's indiscretion might be the means of betraying to Lady Julia, Edgar's unwillingness to offer her his hand; and Edgar was equally anxious to preserve secrecy, because he dreaded the tears and importunities of his mother, and was fully resolved not to yield to them. Though he perceived plainly the faults, the inconsistencies, and weaknesses of his mother's character, and had never been educated to treat her with the respect always due from a son to a mother, still he loved her with a stronger affection than he had ever felt for any other human being; for he felt assured that his mother loved him for his own sake. Her distress at the idea of parting with him, greatly grieved him; he said every thing he could think of to comfort her, and indeed endeavored to present a much brighter view of his future prospects than he believed to be at all consistent with the reality of the case.

Lady Fitz-Clare made him promise a thousand times to beware of Indian ambuscades, never to be deluded into trusting savages, to have a care of cannibals, to avoid wild beasts and all those sort of things; not to expose himself to the noxious air of marshes.

not to lose himself in forests, not to drown himself in a canoe ; and, above all, not to court one of his cousins, though she could hardly suppose he would think of that ; and, lastly, to keep a cross which she tied around his neck to preserve him from harm, until they met again, if he should ever be spared to return. Tears choked her utterance at this supposition, and Edgar, affected by her distress, endeavored to soothe her, without any farther attempt at reasoning with her. Since it was impossible to persuade her that many of her fears were groundless, the next best thing was to make every promise she required, and assure her that he would take every possible and impossible precaution for his safety, which she wished.

He spared both her and himself the pain of parting, by setting out at an early hour, without informing her of his intention, leaving a note in his dressing-room for her, filled with all he thought best fitted to afford her consolation. He had some desire to test his father's firmness, and acquainted him with the time of his departure. He was surprised in the cold gray light of the morning at meeting Lord Fitz-Claire, and though his voice was firm, and his manner calm as usual, he was gratified by seeing a tear glitter in his father's eyes, as he pressed his hand and bade him farewell.

CHAPTER XXVII.

O, Love ! in such a wilderness as this
Where transport and security entwine,
Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss,
And here thou art, indeed, a god divine.
Here shall no forms abridge, no hours confine
The views, the walks, that boundless bliss inspire !
Roll on, ye days of raptur'd influence, shine !
Nor, blind with ecstasy's celestial fire,
Shall love behold the spark of earth-born time expire.

CAMPBELL.

EVEN the tedium and monotony of a voyage across the Atlantic, scarcely awakened any desire in Edgar's mind to arrive at the place of his destination ; and his father's determination to banish him to Virginia, appeared to him daily-harsher and more tyrannical. When he arrived at Mr. Clifford's mansion in a humor to be displeased and disgusted with every thing he saw or heard, he could not avoid a sensation of pleasurable surprise. The paternal kindness with which his uncle received him, warmed and cheered his heart ; in William Clifford he perceived a young gentleman of noble and manly appearance, with manners in which the utmost sincerity and openness were so blended with kindness and gentleness, that it was impossible for the most fastidious of human beings to find in them cause of offense or disgust. He could not help acknowledging to himself that Ellen and Sophia both possessed an unusual share of personal beauty, and were by no means unpollished in their manners. If this was the first admission which truth forced from him, despite the strength of his prejudices, and to his own surprise, how much did his wonder increase, as his daily experience continually developed new beauties in Ellen's person and character ! He had felt a sort of undefinable interest in watching Ellen's countenance from the first moment of their acquaintance, though he did not admit her to be strikingly and

dazzlingly beautiful, yet he found a charm in watching the ever varying expression of her lovely face, stronger than any admiration he had ever felt in the display of the most brilliant beauty, which the noblest ladies of England—a land famed for the beauty of its women—could present. There was something, too, entirely new in Ellen's manner and character, something which he could not understand, which excited his interest and stimulated his curiosity; while the delicate and considerate kindness of her manner toward himself, the refinement of her attentions, which seemed only to seek his comfort, and which were paid in such a manner, that it was apparent she rather wished he should feel the benefit of them, without recognizing her agency, at once gratified and mortified his vanity.

Her manner was always perfectly calm toward him, nor could he ever perceive the slightest attempt to attract his notice, or excite his admiration. This was very strange; he could not help being conscious that he possessed personal attractions in a very unusual degree; and the peculiar captivation of his manner had been acknowledged by all who had ever come within the sphere of his influence, nor could he account for Ellen's insensibility toward these advantages. The sort of kindness she manifested toward him might have been exerted just as probably toward his father as himself. He was struck with the native refinement, the exquisite delicacy and justness of Ellen's taste in all subjects on which she conversed, in singing, in reading, in drawing, and in all questions of literature; upon further acquaintance, he was delighted to find her information was varied and extensive, without a shade of pedantry or conceit.

No idea of falling in love with Ellen had ever entered his head, nor did he think of the danger of forming an attachment, where so many obstacles existed to its terminating happily; but he could not avoid being conscious that she excited a deep and undefinable interest in every thing concerning her, that he felt better and happier in her society than he had ever done before. He had often fancied himself in love; and on such occasions, after finding his attentions, which he took care should never be so marked as to commit him, were always even more favorably re-

ceived than he had anticipated, had invariably found his imaginary passion subside. But the sentiment which Ellen excited in his heart was quite different from any that he had ever before experienced, and regardless of the consequences it might involve, he sought her society almost exclusively, as far as regard to appearances would permit, and exerted all his powers to please and excite an interest in Ellen's heart, stronger than the calm kindness with which she appeared to regard him. Though he had mixed in society from an early period, and seen great variety of character, and fancied that he possessed a deep knowledge of human nature, yet a pure, a noble, a guileless nature, elevated by true, strong sentiments of religion, it had never been his lot to meet; and the very simplicity and singleness of Ellen's mind, was a greater puzzle to him, than the most winning artifices of the worldly people with whom he had mingled.

The touching and tender interest which the loveliness of Ellen's character, and the transparency of her heart inspired, made him regard with different sentiments from any he had ever felt before on this subject, the religious sentiments which she sometimes expressed with a fervor and simplicity that left no doubt of her sincerity. There were moments, even, when he could not help doubting whether there might not be some truth in a creed, whose influence could produce in its disciples so much purity, loftiness, and disinterestedness of feeling, combined with such kindness, sincerity, and gentleness; such an union of opposite and almost incompatible qualities, he had never before seen, and glimpses of higher, of nobler, of purer happiness, than he had ever before thought of, crossed his imagination. These visions, however, seldom assumed any distinct or permanent shape; he felt that he was in a land of enchantment, and yielding to the enjoyment of the present, he feared when the moment should arrive, when the spell should be broken, and he should find himself in the cold and gloomy land of reality. But he deferred as long as possible the evil hour when it should become necessary to determine how to act.

He saw with delight the increasing interest he had inspired in Ellen's heart; he learned how to read its workings, from the

varied expressions of her face, which told but too plainly every passing emotion, and in the tones of her voice, modulated by the genuine feeling of the moment, more truly than Ellen herself had done. He believed that she loved him, and what strength, what tenderness must love possess in such a heart as hers; but then he saw, too, the power which other feelings of a contrary nature exercised over her; her religious principles, her attachment to her father, her family, her country—sentiments which appeared inwoven in her very nature, would all conspire against an union with him, unless he should consent to give up every thing he had hitherto most prized, and abandoning society, friends, country, all his ambitious hopes, consent to become a Virginia planter. Even then, unless his creed could be altered, he doubted if Ellen could so far overcome her principles and prejudices as to marry him; and even if this objection could be conquered, he was certain that the delicacy and dignity of her feelings and her ideas of duty, would alike forbid her forming such an union, unsanctioned by Lord and Lady Fitz-Clare's approbation, which he was but too sure could never be obtained. Nothing was to be hoped from Lord Fitz-Clare's coldness of heart and inflexibility of character; his purposes once formed, were never shaken; and Edgar was well assured that a total renunciation would be the penalty for an act of such folly and disobedience as he would consider his marriage with Ellen Clifford to be. Lady Fitz-Clare, he knew, would echo the sentiments of her lord; besides, the strength of her own prejudices and ignorance would be hard to overcome. There would be some difficulty in convincing her that Ellen was not copper-colored, that she did not array herself in skins and feathers, and paddle in a canoe. But still he would not have despaired of overcoming her opposition by entreaties and perseverance, had it not been for Lord Fitz-Clare's influence. Though Lady Fitz-Clare entertained the highest estimation of the advantages of a brilliant position in society, of rank, of wealth, still her heart was not inaccessible to kindly influences; and Edgar thought, if he could present Ellen to her as his bride, her beauty, a natural gift on which Lady Fitz-Clare set an inordinate value, the gentleness of her manners, her considerate kindness would win their way to her favor

These obstacles he feared would be insurmountable, but he would not allow himself to dwell long upon them; indeed, he sometimes felt, that painful as the necessary sacrifices would be on his part, could he be assured that Ellen would so far conquer her religious prejudices as to marry him, he would renounce all the brilliant hopes he had been educated to cherish, and bury himself in Virginia for her sake. When such feelings prevailed, he would determine to endeavor by every possible means to strengthen the influence he possessed over Ellen's affections. Might he not hope to prevail with her to give up every thing for him, and returning to England, despite his father's disapprobation, depend on the remainder of his own slender resources, and his exertions for their support? But upon further reflection this plan seemed almost impracticable. He had never studied a profession, and he knew of no means by which he could exert his talents for the support of a family, without forfeiting his station in society. Could he expose Ellen and himself to contempt, neglect, and poverty, where he had once been the admired of all beholders? No, this could not be; there would be misery and degradation in such a state.

Week after week glided away, and Edgar found it impossible to resolve upon any fixed course of action; meantime he seized the pleasure of the present moment, and indulged a vague hope that, in the course of events, something might happen, to give a more favorable turn to affairs, though reason told him that they were daily growing more unpropitious. Though Mr. Clifford was possessed of large landed property, and the cheapness of provisions in a new country, the facilities of living, even in luxury, afforded by the natural fertility of the country, and its abundance of game, with its noble rivers opening natural means of communication, still Edgar knew that though his uncle's property afforded the means of living in affluence, it could not be changed into money without bringing a comparatively trifling sum. He thought too, that Mr. Clifford would join himself to the malcontents, and should there be a rebellion, of which there seemed a constantly increasing probability, he could not doubt that it would be quelled, and Mr. Clifford would certainly forfeit his

estates. At length, a letter arrived from Lord Fitz-Claire, the contents of which, gave in some degree, a new direction to the current of his thoughts and feelings. It ran as follows :

“ *To Edgar Clifford.*

“MY DEAR SON.—Your first dispatch from Virginia reached me a few weeks since, and made me feel forcibly the immense distance which separates you from what I have been accustomed to consider the only completely civilized portion of the globe—Europe. But I am gratified to observe that with true philosophy you try to make the best of your situation, and hope you will draw from it important advantages, if not much enjoyment, which I am scarcely sanguine enough to hope. Wealth, the great means of enjoyment, that talisman which works more wonders than the enchanted lamp of Aladdin, may be drawn from those fertile lands you describe, with the assistance of an experienced adviser, and such I have no doubt you will find my brother ; for you know in matters of importance, I never take a step without strong and clear evidence that it is likely to prove successful ; and I thought I had ascertained fully, that he is a skillful and successful tiller of the earth. Your evidence corroborates my opinion, indeed your picture is so much fairer than I had expected, that I could not help suspecting you of painting *en beau*, to allay Lady Fitz-Claire’s numerous apprehensions ; though if such were your intention, I can not say it has been very successful, for she seems still to think that you are in a land almost as uncivilized, and as much abounding in perils, as the interior of Africa. She frequently declares that she shall never be happy again until you return to a civilized country, and seems especially to fear that the suns and wilds of Virginia will have an evil influence on your personal charms, which you know she always held in high estimation, and I think she verily believes, that you will return copper-colored, and almost a savage in habits and manners. This is the unkindest cut of all, she thinks, and she can scarcely hope that the ladies will ever again regard you with their former partiality and admiration.

“ I am pleased to hear that your health has improved, and hope

it will continue to do so, as exercise, pure country air, and the simpler habits of life than those to which you have been accustomed, are all favorable to the restoration of health. I am glad too, that your tract of land is so near my brother's estate; the necessary funds for the additional improvements, which your uncle thinks would make the land more profitable, I have sent out by Mr. Granby, who sailed a few days since for New York, to set the same claims. I think you had better meet him there, as I imagine there must be some insecurity and uncertainty in the transmission of money in this new country of yours. It would, too, be an agreeable recreation to you. I have never much affected country life, even in England, and can well imagine what the tedium of a country residence in Virginia must be, notwithstanding all you say of the agreeable circumstances by which you are surrounded.

"Your report of your fair cousins, though favorable, enters so little into detail, that I have formed but an indistinct idea of their charms and accomplishments. I confess I have no taste for what are called natural characters. The term is generally applied to persons who have been deprived of the advantages requisite to form and polish the manners, and who are destitute of tact and skill to conceal the workings of their minds; and for grace, beauty and decorum, the mind requires draperies and decorations, equally with the body. In this opinion, we doubtless coincide, for no one knows better than yourself how to practice the graceful and necessary art of simulation. Like your mother, I have perhaps valued too highly your graces of manner, and power of pleasing in society, though I do not esteem them so much *per se*, as because they are stepping-stones to high places, and the means of enabling their possessor, when gifted likewise with talents of superior order, to win the fame and power, which are the rewards of the efforts of mind—I will not say genius, as this is a word so much abused and misunderstood. You know all my visions of the future glory of my house have rested upon you, as Francis not only is destitute of the peculiar attractions and talents with which nature has gifted you, but is likewise doomed to mediocrity, from the quiet and unambitious turn of

his mind, and delicate state of his health, which is, I fear, growing weaker.

“Those discontents in America appear to be assuming a somewhat serious aspect—that is, for the malcontents; as to rebellion, were they mad enough to attempt it, there can be no doubt that it would be crushed in the bud. But I can scarcely suppose they will venture upon such a step. I am not surprised that my brother should incline to what is called the liberal side in politics, he was always rash and ardent in his disposition, fond of bold and novel views, and rushing to take steps at which the wise and prudent would pause, without fearing or weighing consequences. I trust, however, that the sober touch of time has somewhat calmed the native impetuosity of his character, and as he has property at stake, and a family whose interests he will consider, that he will not rush upon any hasty or ill-advised measure.

“I do not like the picture you draw of William Clifford’s character; that sort of enthusiastic temperament and thoughtful disposition, nursed and cherished by retirement, is the very stuff of which rebels and fanatics are made. But I know you too well to fear your becoming infected with what are called republican principles; and I still hope the time is not very far distant, when you will be restored to the comforts of home, the charms of society; and when some of the bright visions of fame, of power and wealth, which I have so fondly indulged in for you, may yet be realized. Lady Fitz-Clare will write to you herself. Say all that is polite and agreeable for me to your uncle and cousins. Adieu, my dear son.

“Yours affectionately,

“FITZ-CLARE.”

CHAPTER XXVIII.

'There comes
For ever something between us and what
We deem our happiness.

BYRON.

VARIOUS and mixed feelings were excited in Edgar's mind by the perusal of his father's letter; it awakened contradictory wishes and emotions which had lain dormant in his heart. Ambitious views had been instilled into his mind from his very cradle, and his hopes of future distinction had been as strong, and his visions as bright as those which Lord Fitz-Clare entertained for him. Virginia, he saw, was no theatre of action for him. Though Lord Fitz-Clare's character and mode of treatment, were not such as to inspire strong affection in his son, yet Edgar felt great admiration for his talents, and respect for the wisdom of his opinions, and he was painfully impressed with the certainty of meeting his father's contempt and disapprobation, should he venture to acknowledge his attachment to Ellen Clifford.

But how could he give her up? How could he shut out forever the only light of true happiness that had ever dawned on his path? Conscience whispered, too, that he had used every means in his power to gain her heart—the most generous, the most guileless, the truest of hearts—and should he now wound it by abandoning her, when he felt almost certain that she loved him? though he was far from being sure that she would accept his hand, even were it offered to her; indeed under present circumstances, he was nearly convinced she would not. He received, at the same time with his father's letter, another from a favorite companion, Sir Henry Vere, who having ruined his constitution and his fortune by dissipation, had accepted the invitation of a wealthy uncle in New York to reside with him, promis-

ing on this condition to make him his heir. Sir Henry wrote an eloquent lamentation upon the hard fate which had driven him into exile; painted in the most glowing colors the charms of London society, which he had been compelled to abandon; and mentioned how much Lady Julia had grieved at Edgar's absence; that she could not disguise her love for him; rallied him upon his cruelty, and wished he could have been as fortunate in winning her favor, as he should have known so much better how to value it. He concluded by entreating Edgar to visit him in New York, and drew a ludicrous description of what he supposed to be the nature of his pursuits and employments, and the society he met with in Virginia.

These letters determined Edgar to set out immediately for New York; and he felt, too, it would be some relief from the increasing difficulties of his position, though the idea of leaving Ellen was painful even beyond what he had imagined it would be, and he delayed for days acquainting her with his intended departure. An undefined sense of coming ill hung over him; his mind naturally imaginative, without the aid of religion to regulate or give it strength, by imparting elevated ideas of the Divine attributes, and a belief in the love of God to man, was often haunted by presentiments, which he found it impossible to shake off. He sought before his departure to ascertain more clearly the strength of Ellen's love for him, and to bind her as closely as he could, without openly declaring the nature of his own attachment, and offering her his hand. Should he take this decisive step, it must be with the firm assurance that his offer would be accepted, as he could not bear the idea of renouncing all his worldly hopes and prospects for her sake, and running at the same time the hazard of exposing himself to the mortification of a refusal. He endeavored, during their conversation in the library, to read Ellen's soul, and was fully satisfied that she loved him truly, tenderly; though he was even in a greater state of uncertainty than he had been in before, as to whether she would accept his hand, were he to proffer it. He saw her emotion, when he spoke of leaving her, perhaps forever; the deep blush which overspread her face, as his expressions of affection

became so strong, that though he veiled them under the name of friendship, the merest novice in the human heart must have guessed them to be dictated by a warmer sentiment. Ellen's embarrassment, her doubts in interpreting his language, and how far she should reply to, or encourage his expressions of affection ; her dread of appearing to understand more than he meant ; the motives which occasioned her hesitation in consenting to wear the cross. The tenderness and regret which mingled with these feelings, were but too clearly painted, in the changing expressions of her eloquent face, and in the tones of her voice, which vibrated as readily, as sweetly, to each passing emotion, as the *Æolian* harp to the sighing of every breeze.

He felt delight in the consciousness of being beloved, though his heart smote him with a sense of the selfishness and insincerity of his conduct toward Ellen ; and he knew that no one could have convinced her that he was otherwise than noble, generous, and sincere. The confidence which she had often shown so plainly she felt in him, sometimes awakened a sensation of shame in his bosom, and a determination to endeavor to deserve it.

As he pursued his journey to New York, and had full leisure for solitary musings, Ellen was the almost constant theme of his thoughts, but he found his inclinations so contrary to what he deemed the decisions of his judgment—though he might more truly have called them the promptings of ambition, worldly mindedness and pride—that he was plunged into a hopeless labyrinth of doubts and uncertainties.

Sir Henry Vere received Edgar with the utmost delight, and the very sight of him awakened in Edgar's mind and heart, a thousand slumbering associations, and revived desires, which he had believed the new feelings excited in his heart by the delightful and elevating influence of his love for Ellen, and his admiration for her character, had destroyed. He could not have borne to confide his love to any one, unless his own views and determinations had been more fixed. But Sir Henry was the last person, under any circumstances, to whom he would have told his love for Ellen ; he knew him to be utterly incapable of understanding the beauty of her character, her rare gifts of intellect, or

the peculiar fascination imparted by the union of delicacy, simplicity, and sensibility to her manner. The description of such a being would be treated by him with a levity, which Edgar knew he could not brook. He, therefore, evaded all Sir Henry's inquiries as to the ladies he had met with in Virginia ; what he thought of them, whether they were pretty, whether they were barbarous in their manners, and whether he had not lost his heart to any of them. To all his inquiries and raillery, Edgar answered with such an appearance of easy indifference, that Sir Henry soon dropped the subject altogether.

Sir Henry often descanted on Lady Julia's charms, and the admiration she excited, and related many circumstances to prove how deeply she had felt Edgar's departure for America ; accompanying these discourses with declarations of his certainty that she would never marry at all, as hers was one of the very few instances he had ever witnessed of devoted and disinterested attachment. Now, as Sir Henry was Lady Julia's first cousin, and had lived in long-established habits of intimacy with her family, it was but reasonable to suppose that he was well-acquainted with her sentiments, and Edgar was far from feeling sure that it was not with her consent and approbation, that Sir Henry Vere thus attempted to use his influence to recall him. Other suspicions, too, crossed his mind : were Lady Julia's ample fortune at his disposal, by marriage, Sir Henry would have strong grounds to hope and expect that he should receive from one of the earliest and most intimate of his associates, one of the most constant companions of his pursuits and pleasures, some pecuniary assistance, of which he at present stood in peculiar need ; for nothing but dire necessity had induced him to submit to his present state of exile.

Sir Henry's constant good-humor, his agreeable qualities as a companion, his gayety, and the peculiar partiality and admiration he had always evinced toward Edgar, recommended him to his favor ; but he was not so far deceived in the real nature of his character, as to believe that he acted in this instance from purely disinterested motives. His vanity was flattered, however, at this picture of devoted love toward himself, from one who met with such general admiration, and who had rejected the most ad-

vantageous offers for his sake, though her love had been unrequited. He contrasted Lady Julia's unquestioning, entire devotedness, with Ellen's love, which was so mingled with other affections, so opposed by her religious principles, as she would have called them—though he should rather have denominated them prejudices—that he could feel no certainty that it was strong enough to triumph over those obstacles. Yet one look from Ellen, one tone of tenderness, he was conscious, would possess more power over his heart, than all the caresses or unbounded protestations of affection which Lady Julia could lavish upon him. Ellen seemed to have cast a spell over him, to have entered the most hidden recesses of his heart, and to have awakened aspirations of the soul, which though they were transient, still afforded him glimpses of nobler and more elevated happiness than he had ever before dreamed of; he felt what a severe struggle it would cost him to throw off those sweet influences—even were it possible by any effort of the will to conquer emotions which he thought had entwined themselves in his very nature.

One evening as Sir Henry and Edgar were conversing together, Sir Henry, after a yawn, suddenly exclaimed :

"Are you acquainted with Charles Rivers, son of Mr. Rivers, of Yorkshire, where we had a famous shooting-party two years ago?"

"No; I have not the happiness of his acquaintance," replied Edgar; and it suddenly flashed across his mind, that this might be the identical gentleman whom he had heard Mrs. Herbert speak of, as a quondam admirer of Ellen Clifford's; he added, therefore, with an appearance of more interest: "What sort of a fellow is he?"

"Oh, a fine, handsome young man, and would be very agreeable, too, if it were not for rather too strong a dash of sentiment, which, his friends say, springs from an unrequited attachment, he formed somewhere in Virginia. Indeed, I heard him myself speak once with so much warmth of the native graces, and irresistible beauty of some of the ladies he had met with in the New World, that I thought at first he must be jesting, for I supposed the poor girls could have but a poor chance of acquiring graceful

manners, which, after all, must be acquired, if possessed at all ; and as to their beauty, without polish, fashion, or manner, it would not be very attractive to my taste. However, there was something in Rivers's eye, which convinced me he was so much in earnest, that I was not sure he might not do battle to prove the peerless charms of his Dulcinea, and as I did not feel in a warlike mood, I did not dispute any of his assertions. I thought, perhaps, you might have met with this incomparable paragon, of whom he is so much enamored."

"Why, you seem to imagine," said Edgar, smiling, "that there is but one beautiful and attractive lady in Virginia."

"Indeed, my incredulity goes farther even than this ; for I can scarcely imagine, in such a state of society, that even one lady could exist, such as Rivers described—and, if she did, she must be like the Phoenix. Let me see, her name, I think Howard told me, was Emma, or Ella, or Ellen ; I don't know which. He said, he ~~never~~ could draw her surname from Rivers, and accidentally discovered her first name by picking up some stanzas, addressed to her in Rivers's handwriting."

"Really," said Edgar, endeavoring to maintain the air of perfect unconcern he had assumed, "you must have formed a strange idea of Virginia. How do you think it possible for me to discover what lady you mean, by such information. She is either Emma, Ella, or Ellen—you don't know which—and you appear to imagine that the extensive territory of Virginia forms only one neighborhood."

"Then you really never have seen an Emma, Ella, or Ellen in Virginia, remarkable for grace, and beauty, and rare intellectual endowments?"

Sir Henry fixed his penetrating glance on Edgar as he spoke, and despite of his utmost efforts to meet his look with easy nonchalance, his eye sank beneath his friend's, and a slight flush passed over his face, as he replied :

"Perhaps I may have seen ladies by all those names, whose attractions you would deem surprising, considering the advantages of which they have been deprived ; but I know you are naturally incredulous ; besides, your ideas are necessarily nar-

rowed by the constant habit of regarding the first circles in London as forming the world. Your tastes are all artificial; but nature is not without her charms, though we may render ourselves incapable of perceiving them."

"I cry your mercy, sir. I think the fair Emma, Ella, or Ellen, must have made you also a proselyte to the power of natural and unsophisticated charms; for your tastes, Clifford, were once as artificial as mine are now. I fear mine are unalterable, unless I could see this fair paragon; it would be almost worth a journey to Virginia to find her."

"Your case is almost hopeless, I think; you are scarcely accessible to natural attractions; you could not admire the lustre of the diamond unless it were inclosed in a fashionable setting."

"I certainly should not admire it as much in its unpolished state, as when it came polished and set from the hands of the jeweler."

"But," said Edgar, "you do not seem to admit the possibility of but one mode of polishing. Different kinds of society, various modes of life, produce various sorts of manners; yet though they differ they may all have attractions. The wild flower of the forest has its own beauties, as well as those of the parterre, or the exotic bloom of the hot-house."

"Those may pluck the wild flowers of the forest who like them: give me the gay and cultivated bloom of the parterre. Our tastes, you know, greatly depend on our early associations; and as I have always regarded the rose, hyacinth, and myrtle with delight, they will awaken in the mind feelings of pleasure, when the obscure charms of the nameless flowers which deck the forest in gaudy profusion, without one pleasing association connected with them, will pass by unheeded."

"To the mere man of passion, because he is the slave of prejudice, and has neither eyes nor ears for any other sort of beauties than those he has been accustomed to admire; but even this class of persons have hearts and souls, which may, perchance, be awakened, and they may learn that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy.'"

Sir Henry shrugged his shoulders, and his countenance wore

a smile of such peculiar archness, that Edgar did not at all like its expression ; he dreaded lest the real state of his heart should be discovered ; and endeavored to change the current of Sir Henry's thoughts by saying :

" You do not seem to have taken into consideration, in your remarks upon the state of this new world, what is to us of greatly more consequence than the degree of beauty and polish which its daughters may possess—the daily increasing spirit of rebellion among its sons."

" Ay, and among its daughters, too, though they are no great talkers ; they say straws will show which way the wind blows, and observations of trifling matters show me plainly in what direction runs the current of their feelings. The cant I hear daily of the rights of man, of the tyranny of taxation without representation, with all the other stuff of the same sort, of which the patriots, as they are called, are so fond, absolutely sickens and provokes me ; and I wish, from the bottom of my heart, it were in my power to send some of these politicians to Botany Bay."

" I never attempt to enter into political discussions with them, for two reasons : in the first place, I am not sure I could command my temper—and I would not let these people see that they have power to move me ; and in the next, they are greatly incited by the desire for distinction ; and nothing is more mortifying to spirits of this sort than the silent language of contempt."

" This silent language is utterly thrown away upon them ; they only imagine that you ~~are~~ are convinced by their eloquence. They are like unruly children, made rebellious by the over-indulgence of a kind parent ; and England will be obliged yet to resort to the rod to subdue them. I hardly care how soon."

" It is fortunate that your uncle is of your own school in politics."

" Oh, the most fortunate thing in the world. He is a stanch old Tory ; goes for the Church and State ; is an advocate for strong measures ; and thoroughly despises all those would-be reformers. We vent our spleen together ; and this forms a strong bond of union between us. If I had been so unlucky as to find him on the other side of the question, notwithstanding I am

bound to him by the iron chains of necessity, I think I *must* have burst my fetters."

"It is certainly very annoying, this romance of politics, as my father calls these liberal notions; but I have hitherto supposed their discontents would not manifest themselves in any hostile manner. Yet the state of affairs seems daily assuming a more serious aspect."

"Well, be it so; though Mars is not the star of the ascendant in my horoscope, it would do me *good* to see these Yankees quelled. How do you think regimentals would become me?"

"Oh, vastly well," replied Edgar, with a smile; "if you would encourage the growth of a pair of fierce mustaches, and assume 'a swashing and a martial outside,' such as you can sometimes wear."

"Such as I wore the morning you were so kind as to accompany me to see me shot, according to the laws of honor; while I tried to look unconcerned—as if I valued my life no more than a partridge's. And Seymour was hypocritical enough to try to hum a tune. I remember some of the quavers shook more tremulously than those of the best Italian opera singers."

The companionship of such a man as Sir Henry Vere, was, perhaps, better calculated than almost any other circumstance, which could have taken place, to dispel the bright visions of love, of hope, of romance, which had beguiled Edgar into the regions of enchantment. The scorpions of ambition, of pride, which had slumbered in his heart while new and stronger feelings had the dominion, awoke, and he felt their stings in his heart, though he could not resolve to give up Ellen Clifford. His old tastes and habits, too, resumed something of their former sway over him; though he was no longer able to find pleasure in indulging them.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Her lot is on you—silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
And sumless treasures from Affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds—a wasted shower!
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship—therefore pray!

MRS. HEMANS.

DURING this period Ellen daily experienced sensations of a more painful and mixed nature. It was a situation new to her, to meet with constant and settled disapprobation; and she found it trying and distressing, even beyond what she could have imagined it to be. Mrs. Herbert, in pursuance of her plan of bringing Ellen to repentance, and of inducing her to make a full confession of the state of her heart, and of all that had passed between Edgar and herself, so that she might judge how far she had committed herself, treated her with studied, and almost contemptuous coldness. Ellen's feelings were too deeply hurt; and the natural pride awakened in her heart, to see herself treated with injustice, was too strong to allow her to complain of the treatment she had met with, though she felt it more deeply than Mrs. Herbert either wished or intended. Could she have read her aunt, she would have paused in her course, and changed her conduct toward her.

After a day passed in fruitless endeavors on Ellen's part to please Mrs. Herbert, and to restore something like the tone of harmony and confidence, which was wont to subsist in their family circle, dispirited and sick at heart, she retired at night to her own apartment, and sat plunged in a sad reverie—for some time almost unconscious of any thing around her.

She was roused from this state by the light, quick step of Sophia, who always occupied the same apartment with herself, and who entered, humming a lively tune. Ellen started: and

Sophia exclaimed, "What is the matter with you, Ellen? You look as doleful as if you were under sentence of death!"

Ellen looked up for a moment in Sophia's smiling face, and made no reply.

"Why, I have never seen such a change, as a few days have made in you, or rather a few weeks; you seem to take no pleasure in my company; you never talk to me intimately, as you used to do—appear vexed at the most trifling things I say, and really seem to think me unworthy of an answer!"

Ellen averted her face, to conceal the tears that rose to her eyes, and said: "I, too, might say, Sophia, in my own defense, that I find it impossible to be understood. I could almost imagine that I have undergone a complete transformation, as I find myself often accused and suspected of thoughts and feelings most foreign to my nature: but, at least, I am certain that I am not at all vexed with you, nor—"

"Why, then," interrupted Sophia, "did you make me no reply?"

"Because I really did not know how to answer you; and because, too, I was not sure whether you were jesting or in earnest, from the tone and manner in which you asked the question."

"Then, to be more serious, Ellen, I don't think you have been ingenuous with me, nor treated me with the confidence due to a sister. I certainly do not approve of aunt Herbert's harshness of conduct toward you; but, then there is surely some justice and reason on her side. The circumstance of the cross certainly had a suspicious and improper appearance, particularly in you, who had always appeared to possess even a fastidious and unnecessary degree of delicacy on such points; and then the attempt to conceal it, and your manifest confusion when it was discovered, aggravated the matter."

There was much in the matter of this speech to wound Ellen deeply—she who had been so long unaccustomed to censure, and whose ingenuousness and delicacy had never before been questioned. This unsparing reproof, uttered, too, without the slightest apparent sympathy in, or consideration for her feelings, from one who, through life she had always endeavored to shield, even

from the slightest trouble, at whatever expense of feeling to herself, brought fully to her mind Mr. Morton's prophecies with regard to Sophia, and for a moment she was unable to speak. A consciousness, too, that there was some plausibility in what Sophia had said; that the circumstance of wearing a cross which she had evidently intended to conceal, had a suspicious appearance, rendered this attack of Sophia's more deeply painful. After a pause, she said: "You judge me very harshly, Sophia; but I have neither spirit nor inclination to attack you, or defend myself at present. But since so much weight is attached to this suspicious circumstance, as I admit it to be, that the experience my friends have had of my character since infancy, is but a feather in the balance in comparison, it would scarcely be worth while to attempt to regain confidence so easily overthrown!"

"How you do run away with every thing, Ellen; as aunt Herbert says, you are carried away by your feelings, and attach much greater strength to words than they are intended to convey, and can not bear censure, though it may be for your good!"

"Oh, Sophia!" said Ellen, "how can *you* speak to me thus? I may deserve censure, but not at your hands!"

"Is not this exactly a proof of what I just now said—that you can not bear censure?"

Ellen made no reply, and Sophia continued to talk on uninterruptedly for some time, until Ellen at last said: "Perhaps, Sophia, I could not command myself now, to talk of those things exactly as I ought. My silence is not from any design to affect mystery, as you seem to suppose; and at another time I am willing to tell you all about the cross, to which there is really nothing attached worth calling a secret. But, I really can go into no further discussion to-night, and would only request that you will take a retrospect of our past lives, and see if you can find any thing there that will justify your accusation of my want of confidence in you."

Sophia made no concession, nor uttered a word of conciliation; for she thought Ellen had evaded her inquiries, and she felt that she had a right to her confidence. Having discovered, too, that Ellen could on some occasions depart from her usual prudence,

her opinion of her discretion was wonderfully and unjustly lessened ; and she began to agree with Mrs. Herbert, that she had been mistaken in Ellen's character. Mrs. Herbert, however, by no means admitted this mistake to have arisen from any want of judgment, or observation on her own part ; but, rather because Ellen had not been placed in circumstances to call forth the natural defects of her character, which had so long lain dormant, she had naturally supposed them subdued. Though Mrs. Herbert and Sophia were the very antipodes of each other, still Sophia had always been accustomed to regard Mrs. Herbert's decisions, on all grave matters, with great respect ; and her decided condemnation of Ellen's conduct, united with other causes, had produced a strong effect on Sophia's mind.

Ellen passed a sleepless night ; she hung over Sophia who lay by her side, and soon wrapped in a deep and tranquil slumber, and thought how impossible it would have been for her to have slept so soon after having uttered words of unkindness or reproach to Sophia. " And yet," murmured she, " it is best as it is ; her uneasiness would only increase my own. I would not change her light and cheerful heart, even if I could, though surely I might have expected from her something more of kindness, if not of sympathy ; nor should I have supposed an apparent indiscretion could thus have excited her indignation and forfeited her respect."

Ellen again reviewed the last months of her life, the enchanted hours had sped swiftly away, and she had felt during their course, a kind and degree of happiness which she had not often attempted to analyze ; and when she had endeavored to examine her feelings closely, she had been conscious that her happiness proceeded in a great measure from the hope and belief, that a nature so noble and generous, and talents so rare, as she deemed Edgar's to be, would be reclaimed from the darkness of infidelity, and slavery to the gods of this world. Her own observation, united to Edgar's assurances, had convinced her, that she possessed strong influence over him—from whatever feeling this influence might be derived ; and this dangerous impression had perhaps confirmed feelings in her mind, which might otherwise

have been transient. She acknowledged, too, that hours of bitterness had often been intermingled with those of the brightest happiness—bitterness of feeling exceeding any she had ever experienced since the first grief excited by the loss of her mother had subsided; and though she recalled no particular action which she could strongly condemn, still she was conscious that the present frame of her mind and state of her feelings, were quite inconsistent with the composed, and even cheerful disposition, which a Christian should habitually possess.

"How weak I am," thought Ellen. "I, who thought myself so strong, and believed my natural weaknesses removed, because it was so long since I met with a severe trial, that they had lain dormant."

Ellen arose the next morning with renewed resolution, and met Mrs. Herbert, who was on a visit of several days at Woodbourne, with all her usual kindness of manner, and something of her usual cheerfulness, as she entered the breakfast parlor. Mrs. Herbert, however, was not to be turned aside from a course of conduct, she had seen reason to adopt, from mere impulses of feeling. She deemed it necessary that Ellen should perceive she had incurred her displeasure, and fallen under the weight of her heavy disapprobation. She had been gratified at Ellen's depression of spirits, as she thought it evinced some penitence, or at least disturbance at the withdrawal of her favor; and this appearance of renewed cheerfulness, she attributed to regardlessness of her opinions and feelings. She, therefore, returned her affectionate morning greetings very coldly, and turning to Sophia, addressed to her several remarks, so little interesting in their nature, that Ellen could not help believing they were coined for the express purpose of being addressed exclusively to Sophia.

Mrs. Herbert, inquired, at length, of Sophia, where her father had gone this morning, as he was absent from breakfast.

"Oh, you forget, aunt, that I never know what goes on before breakfast!" said Sophia. "If half the house were to blow up, I should scarcely find it out. Where is papa, Ellen?"

"He breakfasted about an hour ago, and rode out," answered Ellen.

"What is he so busy about?" said Sophia.

Ellen might truly have said she did not know exactly; but she scarcely ever evaded a question, and therefore replied, with some change of color, for she *felt* Mrs. Herbert's eye upon her: "It is not his own business, but something about Edgar's affairs which carries him—it is to his plantation he has gone."

"Umph!" said Mrs. Herbert. "Poor Mr. Clifford has to rise at daybreak to attend to the business of an idle young man who is wasting his time in New York, or spending it in dissipation."

Ellen made no reply, though her countenance showed plainly, how unjust she thought this attack upon Edgar. After a pause, she said: "Will uncle George take his breakfast in his own room, or shall I prepare a toast for him here?"

"Don't trouble yourself," replied Mrs. Herbert, then turning to Sophia, observed: "Your uncle is suffering very much from rheumatism this morning, will you send his breakfast to his room, if you please?"

"Certainly," said Sophia. "Ellen, will you pour out the tea, you know best how uncle George likes it, and see if this toast is brown enough. Shall I send an egg?"

Ellen, without saying a word farther, prepared the breakfast, and placed it by Sophia, who ordered the servant to take it up to Mr. Herbert's room. Ellen's faithful friend, little Charles, had taken his seat by her side, as usual, and every moment was making various little requests to her, to cut up his bread, to pour his tea into the saucer, or to break his egg.

"How can you be so troublesome, Charles?" said Mrs. Herbert, in a tone of displeasure. "If you plague your cousin with another request this morning, I will send you from the table." Charles looked up in Ellen's face, and saw her eyes filled with tears, though she had averted her face to conceal them; he threw his arms around her neck immediately, and with that intuitive knowledge and native delicacy which belongs to some children, he perceived that what his mother had said had disturbed Ellen, and kissed her without saying a word.

As Mrs. Herbert had forbidden Charles to apply to Ellen for assistance, various little mishaps took place, and after spilling

his tea on the table-cloth in the vain attempt to pour it out, Mrs. Herbert ordered him to leave the table. Charles obeyed, with the tears streaming silently down his face, and casting a look of entreaty toward Ellen to intercede for him. "I shall have a great deal of trouble with that child, I am afraid," said Mrs. Herbert, as Charles left the room. "Defend me from this exquisite sensibility of disposition, it is always united with a want of firmness, nerve, and moral resolution, and is inexpressibly troublesome and disagreeable to all who have to encounter it."

"Poor Charles," said Ellen, "he is more to be pitied than those who suffer from his sensibility."

"I will endeavor, if possible, to harden his character somewhat, otherwise the child will be useless and miserable; nor can I place any reliance on his principle, as he may at any time be transported by feeling into a forgetfulness of reason and duty."

Ellen was much disturbed to find that her sins were to be visited on the head of her little favorite, but she knew that it would injure Charles's cause to say a word in his behalf, and with some effort remained silent.

"But I suppose, aunt Herbert, there will always be differences of disposition that can not be changed," said Sophia, "at least, I know that I can perceive the same traits of character now, and in Olivia Granville, that distinguished us as children."

"Yes, but there are many reasons for that. You were never placed under the strict system of vigilance which discovers every error in the bud, and crushes it ere it has time to expand."

The sweet face breathing love, the gentle voice, kind even in reproof, of her own mother, arose to Ellen's recollection, and as she thought how invaluable her affection and counsel would have been to her now, she drew a deep sigh, involuntarily.

"Why do you sigh so deeply, Ellen?" said Sophia. "One would think you had lost every friend you had in the world."

"I sighed involuntarily," said Ellen, "which must plead my excuse, though I should better have recollected myself." Then hastily rising to conceal her emotion, she said something that was not very audible, but from the words which reached the ear, seemed to be an intimation of her intention of rejoining them,

after having attended to the necessary domestic arrangements for the day. As she closed the door, she heard her own name pronounced by Mrs. Herbert, and the tones which fell on her ear were those of disapprobation, though she did not hear the words in which this feeling was conveyed ; nor did she wish to hear them, it was enough to know, that her most trifling words, looks and actions, were now the constant subjects of censure and misunderstanding. Throwing a shawl around her, she hastily took the gravel path which led to what had once been her mother's English garden, as she loved to call it, and which had, ever since her death, been the object of Ellen's peculiar care. This spot had witnessed all her joys and sorrows from the days of her childhood, and it was invested in her imagination with a sort of sacred charm, for it was closely connected with the precious remembrance of a mother who had been dearer to her than life itself.

It was one of those beautiful days in March, which sometimes visit us singly, and are so unlike the boisterous and unkind weather of the greater part of this month, that they seem sent from another clime, filling the air with balm, and the heart with those vague yet delightful images of hope, which the coming of spring can scarcely fail to awaken in an admirer of nature. And such Ellen had always been ; from her childhood she had delighted in watching all the varying aspects of nature, whether gay or sad ; her playful and fertile imagination invested even the humblest flower with its own peculiar charms and associations ; the skies, the streams, the birds, the flowers had all spoken to her heart like friends, and she had often found her mind tranquilized and elevated by their mute yet eloquent companionship. She paused now, and looked long and earnestly around her, to drink in the tranquil beauty of the scene ; the immense masses of forest trees were shaded by the palest tints of green ; the first dawn of vegetation, the bright bloom of peach orchards, contrasted with the emerald green of the surrounding wheat fields ; the silvery waters of the James River, whose course was marked by the deep blue tint of its banks, presented a fair and varied landscape, on which Ellen's eye dwelt with a delight not unmingled with sadness. The innocent hours of childhood, the sports of

those happy days in which she had shared with William and Sophia the smiles with which her mother would regard them, came back upon her memory ; and she involuntarily contrasted with her present state of feeling, that season of sunshine and gayety within her heart, when if a transient cloud obscured its brightness, she had flown to her mother's side for consolation, which she had never failed to find. How changed her heart, and how had all her prospects altered ! Her mother, her counselor, her friend, could no more share her joys or sorrows, nor aid her in traveling the rugged path of duty ; her brother who had so long been a source of unmingled pleasure and pride to her, and whose lips, even in childish sports, had never breathed unkindness to her, was now often the object of the most painful solicitude ; for the path which he had chosen was daily becoming more perilous, and she shuddered to think of the fatal and bloody goal which might yet mark its termination. And Sophia ; had she found from her the sympathy, the indulgence, the love which her heart had fondly hoped ? Oh no ! the most favorable construction of her conduct, could not so far blind the candid mind of Ellen, as to induce such a belief ; yet, she thought, she too, perhaps, had been unreasonable in expecting so much sympathy, allowance, and consideration from a temper and mind naturally so gay and unthinking as Sophia's.

Amidst the throng of thoughts which crowded on her mind, Edgar's image was one of the most vivid which her disturbed fancy presented. She could not help acknowledging, that when he had left Woodbourne, the wand of enchantment was broken, which had conjured up so many bright spells of the heart and imagination, during the last few months of her life. If this temporary absence was so painful, how difficult would it be to give him up for ever ; yet severe as the struggle of such a separation would be to her, the pang would be bitterer and more poignant from the renunciation which such a separation must involve, of those hopes and wishes to chase away the darkness in which his soul was involved, on the most fearfully important of all subjects. She dreaded to think of his being again involved in scenes, and exposed to influences, which had already produced such per-

nicious effects on a nature that might have been moulded to all that is good and elevated—to all that is most exalted in humanity. And yet, when once the sword was drawn, which hung suspended by a hair, she knew that Edgar would scarcely remain in a country during a state of civil war, with all his feelings enlisted, though she knew not how strongly, on the opposite side; yet something whispered to her heart, he would not leave *her*, as long as it was possible to remain, in honor or safety.

"Yet why," thought she, "do I strive to lift the impenetrable veil which God, in mercy to our weakness, has placed over the future? Why is my heart filled with gloom, terror, and distrust, when I know that our destinies are in the hands of an All-wise, All-gracious Creator?" How much Ellen wished now for Mr. Morton! His conversation always imparted religious light to her mind, religious strength to her heart; but the ocean now rolled between them, and she thought this separation was perhaps a necessary discipline to her, who had always been disposed to lean so fondly on earthly supports, that they should, one by one, be removed from her hold, until she was brought to look to God alone for that help which it is vain to expect from man.

Ellen loved her father with the most devoted tenderness; but since the death of her mother, and the sad change which had passed over his heart, naturally so alive to all glad influences, she had made it her peculiar care to shield him from every thing painful, as far as possible. She would gladly have made him partaker of all her joys; and every thing pleasurable, however trifling in its nature, she was always the first to think of communicating to him; but all that was unpleasant or painful she carefully suppressed, and presented to him only the bright side of the picture. She would not have given him one uneasy sensation which she could have spared him, for any gratification to herself; and, consequently, she had always denied herself the relief of his counsel and sympathy, in all her perplexities and troubles.

With a mind somewhat tranquilized and composed, Ellen returned from the garden; and, having gone through her accustomed routine of household duties, she tapped gently at the door of Mr. Herbert's apartment, and asked for admittance.

"Come in, my dear; you are as welcome as a May morning," said her uncle, affectionately extending his hand toward her.

Ellen pressed it gently within her own, and inquired after his health.

Mr. Herbert then poured forth a formidable catalogue of all the pains and ills "that flesh is heir to" in Ellen's patient ear; for long ill health made him value the privilege of complaining; and Mrs. Herbert, though she paid him all necessary attentions, and regularly inquired how he felt every morning, when he had been more than usually indisposed, never indulged him in the unnecessary luxury of detailing his sufferings, as she plainly intimated that such conversation partook too much of the nature of vain and sinful repinings.

Mr. Herbert at length checked himself, with a smile, saying: "I trespass sadly on your sympathy and patience, my dear; and since, after all, these evils must be submitted to, the best way is to try to forget them."

"You must let me assist you in that task," said Ellen; "and let us see how we shall best set about it. Shall we try a game of chess, or return to our old volume of voyages?"

"The voyages, Ellen, if you are at leisure to read to me; the attempt to read myself brings back the headache."

"I have time to do anything in the world you like best," said Ellen, taking down the huge volume, and seating herself by her uncle's side.

Mr. Herbert's attention, as well as Ellen's, was frequently distracted from the book of voyages to poor little Charles, who was standing in the corner, with difficulty swallowing back his tears, as a sort of penance for his misdemeanor at the breakfast-table. Mr. Herbert entertained a high respect for his wife's judgment; and from indolence, induced by long ill health, and an unusual aversion for contention, he yielded to her in most points of domestic regulation, and almost entirely in the management of their children; yet sometimes he doubted whether her discipline was not too strict, and was often quite certain that it was very disagreeable to witness.

He had suffered ~~more~~ than usual annoyance from Charles's

punishment this morning ; and determined, at length, at the risk of incurring Mrs. Herbert's disapprobation, to put an end to this discipline ; therefore, averting his eyes from his wife, he called out to the culprit to come to him ; then, taking his handkerchief, he wiped the child's streaming eyes, bade him go and play in the garden or yard, and be a good boy in future.

Charles cast a glance at his mother, as if to see whether he had obtained her consent, but her countenance was any thing but encouraging ; yet, sidling up to her, he held up his mouth to kiss her, as a sort of peace-offering. Mrs. Herbert told him she did not wish to kiss a bad boy, and Charles, with quivering lip, involuntarily took his station at Ellen's side, and seemed doubtful whether or not to accept his father's permission to leave the room.

Ellen's kind looks reassured him ; and when Mr. Herbert again repeated "Go, my son," he left the room with fearful steps, without venturing to cast a parting glance at his mother. Mr. Herbert, fearing to receive from his wife what she called a *respectful remonstrance*, as soon as the door had closed upon Charles, requested Ellen to go on reading. Mrs. Herbert offered no interruption ; but Ellen and her husband were both fully aware that her resolves were fixed as fate, and that, sooner or later, a homily on weak and improper indulgence must be delivered. The involuntary expression of pleasure with which Ellen had watched the retreat of her little favorite, excited Mrs. Herbert's displeasure, as every circumstance to her now, however trifling, was a fresh confirmation of the blamable weakness of Ellen's character ; for indulgence of feeling, in itself, was a weakness in her eyes, and she now thought Ellen gave herself up to feeling too much to attend to the dictates of reason or duty, when they opposed her inclinations.

CHAPTER XXX.

The truth you speak doth lack some gentleness,
And time to speak it in : you rub the sore,
When you should find the plaster.

The Tempest.

TIME passed away heavily with Ellen, for her increasing solicitude about her brother, her anxiety about Edgar, of whom they had heard nothing, and for whom her imagination conjured up a thousand undefined dangers; then her intercourse with Mrs. Herbert and Sophia had become a source of pain rather than pleasure; and, worst of all, though her conscience acquitted her of aught but the purest motives in her conduct toward Edgar, still she was aware that she had not obeyed the scriptural precept of "keeping her heart with all diligence," for emotions most dangerous to her earthly happiness, and hazardous even to her hopes of immortal weal, had gained a fearful mastery in her bosom. The very effort to subdue these feelings—to crush the hopes that would spring in spite of the dictates of reason and duty—had the effect of concentrating her thoughts and emotions on the very subject which she most strove to forget.

As some days had passed away, and Ellen's promised explanation to Sophia was still deferred, and as Mrs. Herbert inquired from day to day of Sophia whether it had been yet made, and her constant answer was in the negative, Ellen became daily more culpable in her eyes; as she considered her silence not only as a strong proof of disingenuousness, but also as giving reason to believe that she had committed herself in some way, which she feared to acknowledge to her friends. The more Mrs. Herbert reflected on Ellen's conduct, the more enormous it appeared in her eyes, and she urged strongly on Sophia the necessity of discovering the truth. For herself, she disdained to sue for confidence that Ellen withheld from her, and she felt, too, that her indigna-

tion was too great to permit her to converse with Ellen on the subject with that calmness which was due to her own character.

It was after receiving some exhortations from Mrs. Herbert on the necessity of urging Ellen to some disclosure, that Sophia rose, hastily walked to the library, and abruptly pushing open the door, found Ellen sitting with a volume lying in her lap, though the expression of her countenance, and the wandering of her eye, showed that it occupied but a small portion of her thoughts.

"What are you reading, Ellen?" said Sophia, drawing a chair close to hers; "or, rather, what book have you lying in your lap, for your eyes seem wandering from it?"

Ellen was startled at the abrupt manner in which Sophia had entered the room, and the tone of inquiry with which she addressed her, and hastily closing the volume, said:

"You are right, Sophia, my thoughts had certainly wandered very far from the book."

"It is one of those black volumes of Spanish poetry, or plays, or something of the sort, that Edgar and yourself used to read together, is it not?"

"Yes," said Ellen, with a faint blush, for she was conscious that she had selected the volume, from the pleasing associations connected with it.

"You have not kept your promise, Ellen, of telling me all that passed between Edgar and yourself, when he gave you the cross. I certainly do not like to demand confidence you seem inclined to withhold; but, indeed, I think your friends have a right to ask some explanation."

"Let me ask, Sophia, if you would have thought it necessary to have given any explanation under similar circumstances? or would you have supposed a circumstance apparently so trivial, required to be mentioned at all to your friends?"

"Oh, as to that, our characters and situations are totally different. If I had suspected Edgar of being my lover, or had thought that others suspected it, I should not have worn a token of affection from him around my neck, secretly, too, and then have betrayed evident confusion and displeasure when it was discovered, and have refused to give any—"

"Enough," said Ellen, and the painful glow of indignation and wounded feeling overspread her whole face and neck, and tears rose to her eyes, in spite of her utmost efforts to repress them. "I did not expect this severity, or contemptuous language from *you*, Sophia, admitting even that I have deserved it at your hands; nor can I think that you have chosen the best method of eliciting confidence. You must be conscious that I have never treated you otherwise than with the utmost openness, and might therefore have been somewhat more indulgent to this first appearance of mystery."

"You were always too sensitive, Ellen; you can not bear the voice of truth. And, after all, what are you doing now, but putting me off with reproaches, and evading my question?"

Ellen looked earnestly in Sophia's face for two or three minutes without making any reply, and then said:

"I can not acknowledge that you have any right to force from me a confession which you imagine I wish to withhold, except the rights of love and sisterly feeling, and these should be urged with kindness to give them any weight; yet, though, after all that has passed, I can scarcely hope for a candid or indulgent judgment from you, for the sake of the love I have always borne you, and the promise I made you, I will tell you all I know about the cross."

Without giving Sophia time to reply—for Ellen did not care to hear what might wound her feelings yet more deeply, which were already hurt to the quick—she related with visible emotion, and without reservation, all the conversation that had passed between Edgar and herself concerning the cross, without comment. She did not attempt to describe his looks and tones, which had spoken more forcibly than his words.

"This is all very strange," said Sophia, when Ellen had finished. "I scarcely know what to think of it; but if Edgar really attached the full meaning to his words they conveyed, and you understood them in their strongest sense, you certainly ought to have received them differently, and not have given encouragement to these equivocal expressions of affection."

"As you admit them to be equivocal, Sophia, you might, I

think, perceive why I should be unwilling to affix a tenderer and more serious meaning to them than they were intended to convey. But the subject is painful to me, unprofitable to us both, let us therefore agree to bury it in silence for the future."

"This very pain, Ellen, shows that your feelings were too deeply interested in the subject, and your conscience not altogether easy, though you do not admit yourself to have been wrong. I can make no promise as it regards the future; but I will say no more now, except that I hope my sister is not so destitute of pride, as to be willing to enter a family that would despise her, to say nothing of—"

"You have said enough, more than enough, Sophia," replied Ellen, in a tone of voice which indicated her painful emotion; "this might have been spared, at least, until you saw reason to believe I was about to take such a step." Ellen rose hastily, as she finished these words, and left the room.

When Sophia rejoined Mrs. Herbert, she felt somewhat at a loss how to answer her inquiries; it was true, Ellen had not enjoined secrecy, but she knew that she would greatly prefer Mrs. Herbert's not hearing the conversation that had passed between Edgar and herself in the library, respecting the cross; and, besides, Sophia was unwilling to aggravate her aunt's displeasure against Ellen. Yet she had no skill in parrying questions, and from the quickness of her apprehension, was often inaccurate in her representations. Though she would not attempt to repeat her whole conversation with Ellen, yet the imperfect sketch she gave of it, and the manifest suppression of some parts of it, made a more unfavorable impression on Mrs. Herbert's mind, than if she had told at length "the plain unvarnished tale."

Mrs. Herbert urged Sophia to take some early opportunity of renewing her investigations, and of attempting to draw from Ellen an avowal of her views, intentions, and the secret feelings of her heart with regard to Edgar Clifford. Mrs. Herbert said, she would herself undertake this office, but that she was sure if Ellen indeed entertained so reprehensible an attachment, as she now greatly feared to be the case, she would be both ashamed and afraid to confess it to her, as she knew that she would not

hesitate to take the most decided steps to blast it in the bud, and to prevent the fatal consequences which might arise from so impious an union.

Sophia accordingly promised that she would seek some early opportunity of attempting to gain her sister's confidence, and of drawing from her a full confession; though, she added, that if she undertook the task, she must apprise Ellen that she should consider herself at liberty to disclose her avowal. Sophia was quite unaccustomed to acting in situations which required caution, thought, or address; and, therefore, felt greatly at a loss how to proceed in the affair. She could not consent deliberately to betray Ellen's confidence, neither was she willing to increase Mrs. Herbert's displeasure toward her; yet she blamed Ellen, she felt anxious to penetrate the mysteries of her heart, to know if any thing of more serious import than Ellen had related had passed between Edgar and herself. Yet she was aware that if she did not undertake this office, Mrs. Herbert certainly would, and such a conversation with her aunt, she knew, would be of all things most painful to Ellen.

Ellen vainly endeavored to struggle with the mingled emotions of mortification, wounded affection, injured dignity, and disappointed hope; for since she was continually driven to the task of self-reflection, she could not help acknowledging that the sweet daily familiar intercourse with Edgar, which possessed for her such charms, must, sooner or later, be forever dissolved, and the influence cease, which she had exercised over his mind, and from which, she had hoped such salutary effects to result to his character. She could scarcely suppose that Lord Fitz-Claire would permit a son possessing such rare endowments, to settle permanently in the wilds of Virginia, even were the colony in a peaceful and prosperous state, instead of being on the very verge of rebellion. She saw clearly the obstacles which existed to their union, even had her own principles and family affections opposed no barrier; and every feeling of her nature would have revolted at the idea of entering any family as an unwelcome intruder. Ellen's opinions and sentiments on the subject of filial duty were, moreover, of the most exalted kind; and she could never have

quieted the accusations of her conscience, or the painful emotions of her heart, in a marriage unsanctioned by paternal approbation.

To feel herself thus the object of unjust accusation and suspicion, to those, too, who were so dear to her, was too severe a trial for Ellen's fortitude. Her usual manner was so calm and gentle, that the change in her spirits did not at first attract attention ; but the watchful eye of affection could not at last fail to perceive the increasing paleness of her cheek and languor of her movements, and the faint smile which had succeeded one naturally so bright that it appeared to cast a radiance over her countenance, and was more strikingly beautiful in its effect, from the somewhat pensive cast of her face—like the beautiful contrasts produced by skillful disposition of light and shade.

Mr. Clifford observed these changes in Ellen's appearance with the tenderest anxiety, and often inquired with the kindest solicitude as to her health and spirits. These inquiries always stimulated Ellen to more vigorous exertions to appear well and cheerful, at least in her father's presence ; and she had the satisfaction of seeing his apprehensions, in a great measure, quieted.

Week after week passed away most unpleasantly to Ellen ; Sophia attempted again and again to draw from her a confession as to how far her affections were engaged, how deeply she believed Edgar's to be interested, what conversations had passed between them, which could be interpreted as bearing on the subject, and what her plans and intentions for the future were. Had Sophia possessed the art of ministering to a mind diseased, or had she even attempted to perform this task in a gentle manner, and with apparent sympathy, she might have drawn from Ellen a full avowal of the most secret workings of her heart ; but Ellen shrank from reproaches, accusations, and suspicions, always implied, and often expressed, of a kind best calculated to wound a delicate and sensitive nature.

The result of these interrogatories Sophia found herself almost compelled to communicate partially to Mrs. Herbert ; and without wishing or intending to produce any such effect, these communications were always the means of increasing Mrs. Herbert's sentiments of disapprobation and displeasure toward Ellen ; and

these sentiments manifested themselves in a thousand ways. For the intercourse of domestic life affords to every woman occasions of tormenting, which, though trifling in themselves, are yet so numerous and various in their nature, that they become almost destructive of the peace of the victim against whom they are aimed. Ellen's temper and affection were proof against those trials, but her spirits suffered severely ; and, naturally prone to self-distrust, her self-examinations and accusations became more frequent, as the cloud of constant disapprobation lowered more heavily upon her.

had hitherto been as intimate, and almost as frequent, as with the members of their own family. William, in pursuance of his determination, seldom visited Windsor; he avoided ever being alone with Olivia, and all those opportunities of familiar intercourse which their intimacy not only warranted, but which appeared so natural, that Olivia could not help believing he had some design in this change of manner. When in company with her, he was always kind in his manner; he did not affect coldness or distance, but an involuntary air of sadness and constraint was always visible; and Olivia, deeply wounded and displeased, often endeavored to conceal her real feelings beneath the vail of haughty indifference, and an affectation of gayety and levity most foreign to her heart, which was, indeed, often heavy and sad enough.

Ellen and Sophia sought, by the frequency of their own visits to Windsor, to preserve unimpaired the friendly intercourse between the two families which had hitherto afforded to both one of the richest and purest sources of pleasure; but, though mutual affection may remain unaltered, when once there arises a source of disturbance among friends, which they can not avow, there must, at times, be something of apparent coldness and painful constraint of manner. How often do the feelings which must be repressed, rise in the heart and tremble on the lips? and how painful is the effort to force them back to their silent prison-house!

Sophia had confided to Olivia all that had taken place among Ellen, Mrs. Herbert, and herself respecting Edgar Clifford, together with her own views and conjectures, for she had the double pleasure of communicating her whole mind, a satisfaction she deemed quite indispensable, and of making those communications with a safe conscience; for Ellen and herself had both always made Olivia partaker of all their thoughts and little secrets; and she did not fear exciting Olivia's displeasure, as she dreaded awakening Mrs. Herbert's, in conversing with her on this subject.

Olivia was grieved and surprised; she had more than once suspected that Edgar Clifford loved Ellen, but she had not

dreamed of Ellen's returning his affection, though she acknowledged the almost irresistible fascination of his manner, the brilliancy of his talents ; yet she said, with an involuntary sigh, that she could not imagine the possibility that such a woman as Ellen Clifford could love any one who did not possess an exalted and heroic character, the noblest moral feelings, and, at least, an acknowledgment of the truth, and a sense of the beauty of religion. Yet she was far from feeling any disposition to censure Ellen, or to judge of her conduct harshly ; she believed that if she had once expressed the workings of her heart freely, there would be nothing in them but what was pure, sincere, and disinterested ; and that she had been gradually betrayed by the fascination of Edgar's manner, the charm of his conversation, and, above all, by the hope of exercising a salutary influence over one so gifted by nature, and, apparently, devoted to herself, into deeper and tenderer sentiments of attachment than she was herself aware of feeling.

But she was hurt that Ellen seemed always to avoid, in conversation with her, the most distant allusion to the subject of Edgar Clifford. Her depression of spirits was frequently visible to Olivia's discerning eye, yet Ellen never expressed any disturbance upon any subject of personal interest, and when Olivia would often kindly inquire why she looked sad or thoughtful, Ellen would always evade the question, though so affectionately that Olivia could not feel vexed ; yet her pride and affection were both wounded, for she felt she had a *right* to share Ellen's inmost thoughts.

Things were in this state, though Time was bearing on its wings changes fraught with the impending destiny of this little circle ; and the storm each day drew nearer, which was threatening to burst fearfully on their heads.

It was a beautiful day in the spring, and Olivia had been prevailed on, contrary to her usual wont, to spend the day at Woodbourne. Mr. Granville excused himself from accompanying her on the plea of business ; Captain and Mrs. Herbert had also joined the party, and something of their former spirit of cheerfulness seemed to prevail in their little circle.

William Clifford had been absent from home two or three days, and Olivia made no inquiry as to the cause or duration of his absence ; yet the bright flush that overspread her face, as his well-known step was heard in the passage, showed that her silence respecting him proceeded by no means from indifference. He entered the room with a quick step, and his whole countenance glowing with animation. After exchanging kind though hurried greetings with all, he exclaimed, in a tone of irrepressible enthusiasm, "The blow is struck ; the sun of liberty has arisen on our country, never more, I trust, to set."

All started, even Mrs. Herbert, at this declaration, and the manner in which it was uttered ; for there was an earnestness and an inspiration in William Clifford's manner and tone, which sent his words to the hearts of his auditors, almost with the effect of prophecy.

"How ? What do you mean ? What have you heard ?" asked Mr. Clifford and Captain Herbert at the same moment, and all awaited William's reply with breathless eagerness ; though in the hearts of Ellen and Olivia, this desire for further information was mingled with almost sickening anguish, for they both heard in William's declaration the death-knell of their happiness.

William proceeded to give a detail of the battle of Lexington, with such vividness and animation, that the scene seemed present to all who listened to him ; the news of which he stated to have just arrived by express to Williamsburg. Various were the emotions portrayed on the countenances of his hearers during the course of this narration ; but those of Olivia and Ellen exhibited the most striking effects of the painful and absorbing interest with which they drank in every word that William uttered. Olivia's face, now covered with the brightest crimson, then overspread by deadly pallor, showed the violence of the conflicting emotions which swelled her heart almost to bursting ; while Ellen, involuntarily drooping her head, and shading her face with her hand, presented an image of meek yet unutterable sorrow.

Olivia had never regarded William Clifford with tenderer love, with more enthusiastic admiration, than while she listened to words which seemed to announce the inevitable, if not eternal

separation which must take place between them ; yet her heart swelled high with wounded pride, and the agony of unrequited affection, as she watched the glowing enthusiasm which was expressed in William's countenance, as he detailed an event which he must be aware would be a death-blow to all hopes of forming closer, tenderer ties with her, if, indeed, she mentally added, he ever formed such hopes. "No," she continued, pursuing this painful thought, "the hopes were all my own, weak, foolish, and mean, even, as they were ; he never could have loved me."

William was so carried out of himself and all surrounding objects by the interest of his theme, and the glorious visions which filled his excited imagination, that he did not at first perceive the emotions reflected from the countenances of his auditors. As his eyes rested on Olivia's face, he was suddenly and painfully recalled to himself ; for the painful nature of her feelings was there too plainly depicted to be mistaken by her lover. All the realities of his situation now rushed upon his mind ; he felt the destruction of all his fondest hopes, and saw the impassable gulf placed between Olivia and himself ; and he perceived, too, with the deepest pain, not unmingled, however, with the pleasure of gratified affection, the sorrow which this separation would cost Olivia.

The excitement of interest, of hope, of admiration, of sympathy which the brave always feel with the brave, gradually subsided, and gave place to feelings of deep seriousness among the gentlemen ; and even William Clifford's face was so entirely changed in its expression, that Sophia, as she looked around, exclaimed :

"This glorious news has made every one look sad except my aunt Herbert. After all, I believe she is the only true patriot among us. For my part, I will confess, I had rather have submitted to the oppressions of the English government from this time to eternity, than to see the country plunged in war."

"You should reflect, ere you speak in this manner, Sophia," said Mrs. Herbert, with much gravity. "Have you no wish to vindicate the rights of your country ? no desire to obtain the blessings of freedom ?"

"Indeed, I can not be a hypocrite, and act the heroine ; 'tis

not my vocation,'” said Sophia. “I really do feel no wish to vindicate my rights at the point of the bayonet.”

“I must acknowledge, likewise,” said Olivia, while her quivering lip and ~~tearful~~ eye showed too plainly the emotion she wished to repress, “I can not consider the breaking out of civil war as a cause of rejoicing; and those will have much to answer for who first drew the sword from the scabbard.”

“But,” said William, “that sin is not upon our heads. The first blood that flowed in this contest was not shed by *us*. Allow me to say *us*, Olivia. Surely your love of justice, your hatred of oppression would lead you to sympathize with brave men, who are ready to shed their heart’s best blood, and deprive themselves of all the endearments of home, and break ties dearer even than life, that their country may be rescued from oppression, and stand forth among the nations of the world great, glorious, and free.”

Olivia averted her face; and tears, which she could no longer conceal, flowed fast, as she replied: “You forget my father’s sentiments; you forget in what feelings—prejudices, perhaps, you would call them—I have been nurtured.”

“Forget it! oh, no,” said William, in a voice so low as only to reach Olivia’s ear. “I can never forget how deeply my views have incurred your father’s disapprobation. Yet his censures, however harsh, shall never destroy the sentiments of grateful affection which I shall always cherish for him—a memorial of bygone days, which nothing can ever efface. But, though I do not ask your approbation, nor claim your sympathy, may I not hope from an acquaintance, a friendship commencing with the first dawn of memory, that you will judge me with your natural candor, and whatever course the stern voice of duty may command me to pursue, believe that I act from the dictates of conscience, and from motives of patriotism, however mistaken they may appear.”

This was uttered in a low, earnest tone of emotion, so different from that in which William Clifford had lately addressed her, that Olivia was completely thrown off her guard; pride, resentment, were for the moment forgotten, and she exclaimed, almost involuntarily, “Doubt you, William—impossible! Doubt your

disinterested patriotism ! I could as soon doubt that the sun was shining in the heavens. But, then, do you not view these grievances in too strong a light ? Do you weigh well the horrors of a civil war ? Do you remember what it must involve— ?”

Here Olivia paused, conscious that her emotions were hurrying her too far. A bright tint of crimson overspread her face, and William saw tears glittering through the long lashes of her down-cast eyes ; and he remembered, with a pang of self-accusation, how nearly he had been betrayed into the expression of feelings, which every sentiment of honor and delicacy forbade him to utter, as he could not ask, nor ought he even to wish them to be reciprocated. He replied, with a serious and firm tone :

“ I have weighed every thing. I see the full extent of all which my steps must involve. This crisis has been the subject of my meditations by day and by night for months past, and I have looked forward with mingled hope and dread to this hour. But could our rights and liberties have been secured without brother raising his hand against brother, how gladly would I have offered up my life to avert such a catastrophe !”

The deep paleness which overspread William’s countenance indicated strong emotion, and the resolute suppression of it. Olivia was penetrated with tenderness, admiration, and regret ; and she said, almost without knowing that she spoke, and with a supplicating glance, which reached the inmost recesses of her lover’s heart :

“ Surely, William, you do not meditate taking part in this horrible and unnatural warfare ; it would be cruel to your father, to your sisters, to you—”

Her voice became literally choked ; and William, in a gentle, yet firm tone replied : “ We will not talk of this now, Olivia. Scenes of war and bloodshed are only adapted to the stern nature of man ; the gentle heart of woman shrinks from them with horror and overwhelming compassion ; but in this awful crisis, we should all seek support from Him, who alone can give strength and courage, for in trials such as these times must involve, our own strength is perfect weakness.”

Olivia felt her fortitude so totally unequal to a longer continu-

ance of this conversation, that she rose hastily, and said she must return immediately to her father, as she knew what a state of consternation he would be thrown into, from hearing this intelligence of the battle. The carriage was instantly ordered, in compliance with her earnest request. She declined all offers of attendance, saying that a solitary ride would best tranquilize her mind, and prepare her to endeavor, as much as possible, to calm her father's feelings. William Clifford attended her to the carriage without uttering a syllable but that little word, "Farewell," so fraught with tender and painful feelings, that perhaps no single word in the English language ever conveyed so much love and so much grief. Sad as Olivia's reflections were during her solitary ride, they were mingled with a sweet though mournful satisfaction, to which her heart had been long a stranger; for William's looks, his manner, the tone of his voice, and the earnestness with which he requested her favorable judgment, so awakened the hope, which had so long slumbered in her heart, that she was beloved by him, and that he was only prevented by a sense of honor from declaring his love; as honor and his principles commanded him to devote himself first to the service of his country; and in doing so, he must renounce her, whatever the effort might cost him.

L*

CHAPTER XXXII.

I love him,
And that's the heaviest link of the long chain
To love whom we esteem not.'

BYRON.

THIS decisive outbreaking of hostilities cast a shade of thought and anxiety on all the circle at Woodbourne; even Mr. Walton was not unmoved by it, though he seldom pestered his head with any thing which did not relate to matters of science or literature; yet all his fixed ideas of allegiance to old England and loyalty to King George were disturbed at this open act of rebellion on the part of the colonists; yet he considered himself as part and parcel of Mr. Clifford's establishment, and determined to share the fortunes of the family, whether for weal or wo. Though every face wore an aspect of more than usual seriousness, Ellen's sadness was so much deeper, and more unmingled with other emotions than that of the other members of the family, that it excited the observation both of her father and brother, and they both sought with the utmost tenderness to animate her courage, to allay her fears, and to soothe the sorrows of which they knew not half the bitterness.

Ellen mourned not only over the dangers which she was sure her brother would encounter, for she knew that he would not hesitate to offer up himself wholly as a sacrifice to his country; but she grieved at the blighting of those fond hopes which she knew Olivia and himself had both vainly cherished, even without knowing their strength. And to these sources of regret was added another cause of sorrow, amounting at times almost to anguish. This commencement of war she feared would be the signal for eternal separation from Edgar, and for a final farewell to those hopes that religious principles, higher and purer views

on moral subjects, might be formed and awakened in a mind, so gifted with the rarest endowments of nature.

It was now about the time when Edgar was expected to return, yet day after day passed without any intelligence from him, and the probability of his return, and conjectures as to the cause of his delay, were the frequent theme of conversation, of all but her who felt the deepest interest in his movements.

Ellen had taken a solitary stroll to visit a poor family that lived on the estate at Woodbourne, for she had not suffered the dejection of her mind to abate the customary regularity with which she performed her duties, but her heart often reproached her for performing those labors of love more coldly, and more mechanically, than had been her wont. When she returned, she met little Charles at the door, evidently delighted that he had some news to communicate; he seized her by the hand, and leading her into the parlor, called out, "Mr. Clifford has come."

Ellen had not time to collect her scattered thoughts or compose her feelings, for there indeed stood Edgar in a traveling dress; Mrs. Herbert seated in one corner of the room with a cold and imperturbable air, and Sophia running on in gay strain of conversation with Edgar. Exercise, and the glow of emotion, had spread a carmine tint over Ellen's usually pale cheek, her eye was lighted up with pleasure and sensibility, and shone with that peculiar lustre and beauty, which Edgar had often compared to the light of the evening star. Edgar felt a sensation of pleasure at her approach, too strong to be able entirely to suppress the appearance of it, yet, observing Mrs. Herbert's glance of cold and displeased scrutiny, he advanced to meet Ellen, with an air of easy composure, which he thought would baffle Mrs. Herbert's curiosity, and disappoint her expectations of seeing him betray the secret feelings of his heart.

He read the delight of Ellen's heart by the expression of every trait of her lovely face, yet a sudden cloud passed over its brightness, as she perceived that she was watched by Mrs. Herbert and Sophia. This suddenly recalled the painful scenes through which she had lately been passing, and those which were still reserved for her.

Edgar's quickness of apprehension, and closeness of observation, made him more fully aware of the state of feeling of those around him by apparently very trifling indications, than most persons would be by the expression of it in words.

With an air of cheerful indifference, he sought to maintain conversation on trifling topics, and lightly turned away all Sophia's inquiries respecting the American troops, the British army, the disturbance of the country, declaring it was time enough to be sad and serious, and that he had no idea of plunging into the stormy sea of national troubles on the first evening of his arrival. He gave a playful description of the state of society in New York, the dress of the belles, the Dutch settlers, and all the little difficulties of his journey.

Ellen felt little inclined to second Sophia's inquiries respecting the state of the country, for the very thought of all that it might involve, produced a sickness of heart and involuntary shuddering. Edgar saw the paleness which overspread her face, and the sudden expression of dejection which overcast her brow as soon as the subject was mentioned; and he perceived too, the eager look of inquiry which Mrs. Herbert involuntarily directed toward him when Sophia addressed her queries to him. He had, therefore, a double pleasure in instantly diverting the theme to lighter subjects, and could scarcely suppress a smile at the expression of disappointment mingled with contempt on Mrs. Herbert's face.

She sat profoundly silent, and stitching as if her life depended on her dispatching the greatest possible quantity in the shortest possible time, only raising her eyes from time to time and fixing them attentively on Ellen when she imagined herself unobserved. Whenever Ellen encountered one of these glances a blush mantled her cheek, and an involuntary air of constraint was perceptible in her manner, notwithstanding her utmost efforts to feel perfectly easy and to seem so.

Edgar perceived plainly that some change had taken place in his absence with regard to the relative position in which he stood to Ellen. He perceived too, that Mrs. Herbert suspected a mutual attachment to subsist between them, and that Ellen had consequently fallen into disgrace. He dissembled his feelings so

skillfully, however, that no one could have guessed how accurate had been his observations, nor what were the inward workings of his heart. In his conduct toward Ellen even Mrs. Herbert saw nothing to which she could make any objection, though she concluded that this must arise from Edgar's consummate art.

At the commencement of hostilities, Edgar could no longer doubt that he should certainly receive ere long a letter from Lord Fitz-Clare to recall him, though nothing less than the voice of an angel could have convinced him in what manner the struggle between the colonists and England would terminate. It was true the rebels had shown that they sprang from a goodly stock, and the result of the battle at Breed's Hill had struck the British army and the loyalists with wonder; but Edgar thought it utterly incredible that undisciplined, unorganized, and divided men, unprovided with all that was necessary for war, could resist the power of the first nation of the world,

"Whose flag had braved a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze."

yet the strong symptoms of increasing disaffection, and the boldness of tone assumed by the Whigs, the brave stand made by the rebels, showed the elements of fearful resistance, and Edgar foresaw that the struggle would be long and bloody ere the rebellion was quelled. In these circumstances he felt that in his position, as the son of a high toned Tory, one too, who had taken an active part in opposition to the Americans, whenever the disturbances of the country had formed the subject of national deliberation; in his own feelings too, which were strongly opposed to the Whigs, all his prejudices aristocratic, a residence in Virginia might not long afford him a safe, nor even an honorable retreat.

Yet he felt it almost impossible to resolve upon leaving Ellen Clifford forever, though in his present situation he thought the obstacles existing to their union so great as to be nearly insurmountable, even were she willing to abandon her country and her friends to follow his destiny. He was sure that Ellen loved him fondly, truly, disinterestedly, but he was not sure of the strength of the principles and feelings which would oppose her accepting his hand; and he determined to return immediately to

Virginia, to see her again, to assure himself beyond mistake of the degree of power he possessed over her affections, and after this was ascertained, his resolutions as to his own future course were so vague, undecided, and inconsistent, that it would have been impossible for him to have explained them even to himself.

Mr. Clifford and William evinced in their intercourse with Edgar a degree of delicacy, kindness and forbearance, which excited his admiration, and he could not help acknowledging, that in the most polished circles of London he should have looked in vain for that exquisite politeness which flowed from their noble and feeling hearts. They carefully avoided all political discussions, and all conversation which might have a tendency to make him feel how widely they were disunited in feelings, opinions, and interests.

This considerate kindness endeared them if possible more than ever to Ellen, for as she meditated oftener on the separation which must take place between Edgar and herself, she felt but the more anxious that this brief space should not be embittered by painful recollections; and that he might look back at the period of life passed in her father's house, as one marked by uninterrupted love and kindness. As it respected his feelings toward herself, her mind became more and more perplexed and uncertain. She could not recall his words, his looks, his tones, on former occasions, without her convictions being strengthened, that he had once entertained a warmer, and tenderer feeling toward her than friendship; yet his manner was now so much altered, that she began to think, either that his sentiments had changed, or that it had been a mere transient fancy he had felt for her, which had again worn off, or that he had at least resolved to subdue every emotion of tenderness for her, if any such existed in his mind.

It is better, much better, that it should be so, thought Ellen; I shall never seek to weave again ties which he wishes to break; yet, at least, on my part, there shall be no unkindness. And Ellen sought, by every means in her power, to restore an air of cheerful friendliness to their intercourse, without adverting to the former terms of intimacy and confidence which had existed

between them. But to her kind and playful remarks, Edgar would often reply with the most formal politeness, or chilling indifference; and an air of constraint was so generally thrown over his manner toward her, that Ellen, conscious, too, that every thing she said or did was disapproved or misunderstood by Mrs. Herbert and Sophia, and not at all sure what views Edgar might entertain of her feelings or conduct, found it impossible to maintain the cheerful, easy, and friendly tone of intercourse which she had sought to establish.

At the close of one of these days of restrained domestic intercourse—three words which, perhaps, convey as much of discomfort as any other three in the language—Ellen retired to her own room, and believing herself alone, covered her face with her hands, and uttered a long and deep-drawn sigh.

She started, as she heard Sophia, who was standing in the recess of one of the windows, exclaim: "One would suppose you were in the lowest depths of despair, to hear such a sigh. What in the world is the matter with you, Ellen? Really, it is enough to make any one feel gloomy to look at you."

"I thought I was quite alone," said Ellen, hastily brushing away a tear. "I do not wish to make you gloomy, Sophia."

"This is not answering my question, Ellen; I can not help seeing that you are unhappy; nor do I see any cause you have to justify it, particularly as you profess to be guided and governed by Christian principles. It would rather prejudice those who observe you against the cause of Christianity, to see one of its votaries so gloomy."

"Your reproaches are very severe, Sophia, and the more cutting, because I feel there is some truth in them. I was not aware, however, that I had appeared so gloomy, as I have made great efforts not only to seem, but to be otherwise. Yet, I think we all have causes of deep seriousness in the state of the country, and the dangers which may threaten those who are dearest to us, and—"

"Yes, yes, this is true; and I try to keep from thinking of these things, as much as I possibly can. I see no good that can come of foreboding the worst, and infecting other people with our

own fears. But be candid, Ellen; was it this cause of disturbance which produced that heart-breaking sigh?"

"Many causes, Sophia," and Ellen looked wistfully in her face, as if appealing to her indulgence and sympathy.

"If Edgar is one of those causes, I really think his conduct is well calculated to remove your difficulties, and to convince you that he never entertained any sentiment of peculiar tenderness toward yourself. Your path is now plain enough—"

Sophia paused for a reply; but Ellen did not utter a syllable, until her sister repeated, "You surely do not continue to labor under the delusion that Edgar loves you?"

"Why," said Ellen, "thus unkindly interrogate me, Sophia? Why seek to penetrate my thoughts, and draw from me an avowal painful and humiliating to any woman? You say it is evident that Edgar never felt for me any peculiar affection; and it is certainly plain that, if he ever did entertain any such feeling, it is either changed, or he has determined—"

Ellen stopped. Shame at her own weakness, deeply wounded feelings, and offended pride, now dying her cheeks with crimson, then sending back the warm current with sickening force to her heart, changed her very lips to the hue of ashy paleness. As she perceived Sophia's eye fixed steadily on her with surprise and disapprobation, she felt that any attempt to open her heart to her, would only occasion a greater degree of misunderstanding on Sophia's part; and, moreover, she did not wish to expose herself to the trial of hearing words so cutting, so cruel, from the lips of one she loved so truly, so tenderly, that she would gladly have spared her feelings in the smallest as in the greatest matters, even at the expense of her own.

"Really, Ellen, you should have more self-command; you accuse me very unjustly of unkindness, when I meant exactly the contrary. I merely wished to show you that since it was now evident that Edgar, so far from entertaining any particular affection for you, seems, in fact, to take pains to convince us that he really feels no preference for your company or conversation, I should suppose pride, and a sense, too, of how many disagreeable circumstances an engagement between you

would have been attended with, would enable you to conquer your—”

“Forbear, Sophia; do not continue to utter words which, in the same situation, my tongue would refuse to pronounce to you, and which sink into my heart, and indelibly engrave themselves there.”

“I speak entirely for your own good, Ellen; though I perceive what I say has no effect but to make you angry with me.”

“Angry! Oh, Sophia, how greatly you mistake my feelings.”

“Perhaps I do; for I confess I can neither understand them, nor sympathize with them, Ellen; you permit your feelings to carry you to such lengths, that it is really painful to enter into conversation with you. As to counsel and sympathy, I don’t see how you stand in need of them; you have only to forget the delusions of your own imagination and every thing will be restored to its former footing.”

An involuntary sigh was Ellen’s only reply; then, rising quickly, she left the room, to endeavor to compose her thoughts, and to consider how far Sophia’s accusations were just.

On the following day she determined to return the cross to Edgar, which he had requested her to wear until they met again; but she could not exactly resolve on the best manner of doing this. To restore it in Mrs. Herbert’s presence would be impossible; and after all that had passed between Sophia and herself on this subject, she felt it equally impossible to return it while she looked on, and would doubtless draw the most humiliating inferences from any appearance of emotion, which might be visible in her manner.

Her confidence, too, in Edgar’s love and admiration was almost destroyed, and her distrust of herself painfully increased. Yet she mentally exclaimed, “I have, at least, the consciousness of intending to do what is right. God knows my heart. He will pardon its weakness, and strengthen its resolves.”

Then, allowing herself no further time for deliberation, she hastily entered the library, where she knew Edgar was reading. As she closed the door, and stood alone in the library with Edgar, it suddenly occurred to her that he might put an interpretation

on this action, of all others the most humiliating ; and ascribe this apparent determination to seek a private interview, which he had rather sought to avoid, to motives most deeply wounding to her pride and delicacy. She remained for a moment standing in painful indecision and embarrassment, until Edgar, rising with an air of cool and composed politeness, placed a chair for her.

Edgar's manner was certainly not calculated to reassure her ; but without giving herself leisure to *feel* the painful circumstances of her situation, she advanced with as ~~much~~ ease as she could assume, saying, with a smile, "Thank ~~you~~, I do not wish to be seated, I did not come for the purpose of a formal conference, but simply to avail myself of this opportunity to return your mother's cross." As she said this, she hastily, and with some trepidation disengaged it from her neck, and presented it to Edgar.

"Wherein has my poor cross offended," said Edgar, as he took the cross from Ellen's trembling hand. The tones in which these words were uttered, were expressive both of sadness and displeasure.

"In nothing," said Ellen, "I have ~~only~~ returned it to its original destination, and fulfilled the wishes of the donor."

Edgar's eyes were fixed on her with an expression so sad, so reproachful, and so penetrating, as if he sought to read the inmost secrets of her soul, that Ellen involuntarily cast down her eyes to avoid his glance. At length he said : "Since it has no longer any value in your eyes, I will not ask you again to wear this idolatrous relic next your heart, for the sake of one too, so entirely unworthy."

"I did not intend, Edgar, to offend or wound you. How can you attach an offensive meaning to an action so simple ? Consider whether I have ever done or said any thing since we have been acquainted, to displease you."

The sweet tone of expostulation, the natural and affectionate manner in which Ellen addressed him, found their way to Edgar's heart. He saw that she was thrown off her guard, and the caution, reserve, and constraint, which he had sometimes lately observed in her manner toward himself, were for the moment

completely forgotten. He carefully concealed, however, his own emotions, that he might more effectually draw forth and observe hers, though he could not avoid being struck with the contrast between the pure, ingenuous and disinterested nature of Ellen's love for him, and the insincere and ungenerous course which he was pursuing toward her.

"I have never complained," he said gravely, "of being either offended or wounded; I possess no right, I urge no claim."

It suddenly occurred to Ellen that Edgar might suppose her speech referred to some peculiar and tender feeling which she imagined existed between them. Her very brow was tinged with a deep and painful blush, and she said with an air of as much indifference as she could assume, which indeed, was a thin disguise to the eye of so penetrating and interested an observer as Edgar Clifford; "I thought you possessed some claims in common with all those to whom I am bound in the ties of kindred and friendship, unless you mean to renounce them. But I will not interrupt you longer," then hastily turning away, she withdrew without turning her eyes again toward Edgar. He remained doubtful whether to follow her or not, though not at all doubtful as to the degree of power he possessed over her feelings, and delighted in this consciousness; yet very uncertain as to how far Ellen was herself conscious of the state of her heart, and whether she would not think it necessary to make strenuous efforts to conquer these emotions.

But he smiled as he thought how vain her efforts would be to free herself from this bondage of her affections, how ineffectually her generous, guileless, and deeply feeling heart would seek to throw off the fetters of one who knew so well its nature and its weakness, and understood so perfectly how to use them to his advantage.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

But wo for those who trample o'er a mind !
A deathless thing.—They know not what they do,
Or what they deal with !—Man perchance may bind
The flower his step hath bruised ; or light anew
The torch he quenches ; or to music wind
Again the lyre-string from his touch that flew
But for the soul ! oh ! tremble, and beware
To lay rude hands upon God's mysteries *there*.

MRS. HEMANS.

ELLEN's situation became daily more trying, and she found her health and spirits becoming daily more and more unequal to the task of appearing cheerful, and of going through the accustomed routine of duty. She reproached herself for the heartless and mechanical way in which her duties were now often performed, and for the painful conflicts of feeling which she daily experienced ; for she felt how far this state of mind was removed from that "peace which passeth all understanding," which, as it is a privilege promised to all Christians, it must be their own fault if they do not obtain. To a mind naturally too sensitive, and prone to self distrust, there is nothing more dangerous than continued self-reflection, where it can not lead to action. Our emotions are so varied and mixed, and the boundaries between right and wrong are often so vaguely and obscurely marked, that the anxious and frequent attempts to analyze our feelings, and to discover how we have been led to deviate into error, while supposing ourselves to be following the narrow path of duty, has often led the conscientious and reflecting into inextricable perplexity, and disturbed those fearful and mysterious springs by which reason is adjusted.

To persons of this cast of character, some outpouring of the heart, some friendly sympathy is almost a necessity of their natures, and when debarred from these, the heart and mind brood upon and consume themselves. Reproaches are worse than vain ; for they only increase an already morbid state of feeling ; they sink the heart with discouragement ; deprive the mind of energy ; and afford new food for painful meditation and self-reflection. One word, one look of kindness would minister more healing to a mind diseased, than a volume of reproaches and reasonings, however just they may be.

Since the day on which Ellen had restored the cross to Edgar Clifford, his manner had become colder and more distant toward her. Ellen endeavored to act as if she did not observe it ; yet she felt that it produced a sense of constraint, which it was impossible for a person of her quick sensibilities and extreme delicacy to overcome. Her remarks, if she attempted to join in familiar and indifferent conversation with Sophia and himself, were always answered by Edgar with the utmost politeness, if addressed to himself ; but so concisely, and with such apparent want of interest, that she found it difficult to continue to sustain any share in conversation.

Meanwhile, Sophia found increasing pleasure in the vivacity and varied resources of Edgar's conversational powers, for a companion who could enliven the passing hour, was never more acceptable than at this time. Her conviction constantly gained strength, that his former intimacy with Ellen had been purely accidental, nor did she trouble herself to explain any thing contradictory or strange in his present or past conduct.

Mrs. Herbert's doubts and suspicions were not so easily removed. She could not forget the affair of the cross, nor could she explain away the partiality Edgar had once shown for Ellen's society, contrasted with his apparent indifference toward her at present. She concluded, therefore, that his former course of conduct had been dictated by heartless vanity, which had led him to trifle with Ellen's affections, merely to gratify himself by this exercise of power ; and to amuse the tedium of a country residence. Her contempt for him, and dislike toward him were

therefore redoubled ; but as she no longer feared his seeking Ellen's hand, she did not think it necessary to take any active measures in the affair, or make any communication to Mr. Richard Clifford, as she had once intended to have done, on the subject.

But she was deeply mortified and provoked, that Ellen could have been duped by Edgar Clifford's artifices, and that she should ever have bestowed her affections, which she determined to be the case, upon an object so unworthy of them. The slightest acts of courtesy and kindness from Ellen toward him, even such as could not, without violating the ordinary rules of good breeding have been omitted, were observed by Mrs. Herbert with an eye of indignant disapprobation, and Ellen felt abashed, uncomfortable, humbled beneath the rebuking glance, which her heart told her she had not merited.

Ellen had seated herself one evening a little apart from the family circle, and had placed her drawing materials on a table beside her, and commenced a flower-drawing, chiefly as a pretext for silence, without attracting observation, or drawing on herself the imputation of bad spirits, from the very slender portion she contributed to general conversation. She appeared engrossed by her occupation ; but Edgar's quick glance, which was frequently directed toward her, when he perceived he was not observed, noted the varying shades of color which passed across her cheek, and the tremulous motion of her hand, as he, with apparent carelessness, dwelt on themes, which he thought would touch the chords of feeling within her heart. He spoke to Sophia of his probable recall to England, and gave a sportive representation of the manner in which Lord and Lady Fitz-Claire would meet him on his return, the characteristic questions which would be proposed by each member of the family, his father's inquiries as to the state of the country, its soil, its customs, and the situation of political parties, his mother's interrogatories as to manners, dress, the attractions of the ladies, and domestic arrangements !

Mrs. Herbert sat bursting with indignation, and thinking in what possible way, without violating propriety and dignity, she

could best mortify his vanity, and express in how very slight a degree of estimation she held his opinions, or those of Lord and Lady Fitz-Claire. But her weapons of warfare, like the military engines of old, were cumbrous and not easily brought into play ; so that often, while preparing for an attack, the opportunity for action passed away.

Charles had drawn his seat close to Ellen's, and petitioned to be furnished with drawing materials, that he might draw some flowers, too. Edgar marveled at the patience with which Ellen listened to his demands, supplied his wants, and stopped her own work every two or three minutes to look at the scrawls for which Charles demanded her admiration.

"How can you be so troublesome, Charles?" said Mrs. Herbert, whose attention was attracted toward the child by his incessant questions to Ellen. "Do not tease your cousin," she added ; "come away."

"Oh ! pray, aunt, let him stay !" said Ellen, looking up, for the first time, from her work ; "you don't know how much pleasure it gives me to gratify his little wishes."

It was not in a mother's heart entirely to withstand this assurance, made with so much affectionate earnestness ; and Mrs. Herbert contented herself with replying : "Indeed, I do believe, Ellen, it gives you pleasure to spoil every one within your reach ;" but as the tone was more than usually kind, and she did not repeat the command to Charles, to come away, after looking inquiringly in his mother's face for a minute, he drew his chair more closely toward Ellen, and whispered : "You do not spoil me, do you, cousin Ellen?"

"I hope I do not, my dear."

"Oh, no, I am always good when I am with you !"

Mrs. Herbert, having watched in vain for an opportunity of effecting her purpose of mortifying Edgar, withdrew from the room for a fresh supply of working materials ; and Sophia was obliged to follow her in a few minutes to answer a note she had just received from Olivia.

Edgar remained perfectly silent, and without offering to approach that part of the room in which Ellen was seated. She

felt the awkwardness of this silence so much—though any remark she now addressed to Edgar appeared almost like an intrusion—that, after revolving various speeches in her mind, and rejecting all, she at last said: “This is a beautiful evening; delightful for exercise!”

“Yes, delightful for those who have health or spirits to take exercise.”

Ellen raised her eyes and fixed them on his face with an expression of affectionate concern; she had not before observed that his cheek was flushed, and that he looked far from well. “I did not know,” she said, “you were indisposed this evening; I thought you seemed in fine spirits.”

“*Seemed!*” said Edgar. “Do you not know how different it is to be, and to seem?”

“It is very painful to seem what we are not,” said Ellen.

“Yes, very painful, even to me, who have been taught even from childhood to conceal the warmest feelings of my heart beneath the mask of indifference. But in this world of ours, there is nothing more necessary than dissimulation.”

“But we should not conceal from our friends what relates to our health or welfare.”

“And why,” said Edgar, “should we value so highly life, which is so fleeting and precarious, and so little worth preserving? Do you find it, Ellen, so full of charms? For myself, I think I could resign it without a sigh.”

Ellen did not reply immediately; a crowd of emotions rushed to her heart. She said at last: “Our lives are not our own; the dread responsibilities they involve, the glorious and immortal destinies which are entwined with the thread of our feeble and fleeting existence, forbid us to estimate it lightly. Whether the part assigned us is one of pleasure or of trial, will soon avail us little; meanwhile, it is of unspeakable importance to us that we should not desert the post assigned us.”

Edgar looked earnestly at Ellen as she spoke; a color faint and exquisite as the hue of the blush-rose was on her cheek; and the white rose Charles had twined in her raven-hair seemed a fit emblem of the pure and hallowed beauty of the soul, which

shone in the glance of that dark eye that was fixed on him with an expression of deep earnestness and feeling. He saw that she had completely forgotten herself; and this entire forgetfulness of self, which was one of Ellen's most striking characteristics, constituted, in his eyes, one of her most powerful charms. Nothing is more fascinating to the selfish than disinterestedness in others.

"Your dreams are so bright and beautiful," said Edgar, "I can scarcely wish to replace them by the stern and cold realities of reason; though, I know all who can not see visions, and dream dreams, such as are dear to your feelings and imagination, are viewed by you with a sort of horror, as rejected by God, and dangerous to mankind. It is true, you would not like Mrs. Herbert have me bound to a stake, and roasted alive, for my heresies, because your heart is not formed of stuff so stern; but you view me with disapprobation as strong even as hers."

He saw how deeply this speech wounded Ellen, for her eyes filled with tears in spite of herself; and the low, sweet tones of her voice faltered as she replied, "You do me injustice, Edgar. It is useless to attempt to explain how entirely you misunderstand me; this is, comparatively speaking, of small importance. But I shudder at your deliberate renunciation of the highest hopes, the most glorious destiny, which the heart of man is able to conceive, of that faith which can alone explain the awful mysteries of our nature."

Edgar shook his head. "I should only sink myself lower in your estimation by pursuing this subject; yet it is somewhat hard to find ourselves the objects of reprobation for the sake of a creed, as all who have ever studied the workings of their own minds must be aware that belief is not voluntary."

Just then Sophia returned to the parlor, having finished and dispatched her note; and Edgar, instantly changing his tone and manner, began to address his conversation to her in a tone so light and playful, that Ellen found it difficult to believe that, but a moment before, his whole countenance and manner had worn the air of deep feeling. A sad conviction of the fearful risk which was involved in trusting to one who could so completely

and immediately assume an impenetrable mask of dissimulation oppressed Ellen's mind; the truth, the earnestness, the simplicity of her own nature, made the slightest disguise, or appearance of deception, painful to her; and she was prone to believe implicitly in the sincerity of those she loved. Yet she found it impossible to bestow this confidence upon Edgar; his conduct was alike inexplicable to the principles of her reason, or the feelings of her own heart; she could neither understand nor sympathize in the various and inconsistent moods of his humor.

Could she have ascertained that he was indifferent toward her, she felt that her mind and heart would be comparatively at ease, though such a discovery could not be unattended by pain, especially as in this case it would be impossible to acquit him of deliberate insincerity. But she would then, at least, be spared the deep regret of believing that Edgar's happiness was in any degree dependent upon herself; while her duty to her God, to her father, and to his parents, forbade her to promote it by uniting herself to him. And even were all these obstacles removed, the difference of their views, their principles, their feelings on many subjects, which difference became every day more apparent, made her doubt whether either of them could find happiness in such an union. Ellen had sometimes believed that she might contribute to his temporal happiness, and promote his eternal welfare; but she had begun lately to consider this belief as a delusion, and to wish most fervently to discover that she had been deceived—if such were, indeed, the case.

Ellen relapsed into silence, and appeared engrossed by her occupation, though her thoughts were so little engaged by the employment of her fingers, that she could scarcely have told whether she was drawing a rose or an anemone. As she heard Mrs. Herbert's step approaching, a consciousness arose in her mind, of the unfitness of her performances to bear the test of criticism; and she hastily put them up in her portfolio.

"Do pray, cousin Ellen," said little Charles, "hide this ugly horse I have been drawing, its head is just like a dog's. I don't want mamma to see it."

Ellen smiled as she complied with his request; and, taking a

seat by Mrs. Herbert, offered her assistance on a huge piece of worsted work—an employment which approached more nearly to the nature of a recreation, than any other in which Mrs. Herbert ever indulged. Once, as her eyes were raised from her work, they met Edgar's fixed on her, with a glance of sad and reproachful tenderness ; but they were instantly averted.

She was seated near enough to Sophia and Edgar to hear their conversation ; but as their remarks were addressed entirely to each other, she did not attempt to join in it. She heard Sophia say, in a laughing tone, " Confess truly, Edgar, tell me how many fair ladies have had possession of your heart, differing, perhaps, in all respects, except in being fashionable and admired, for those, I know, would be indispensable requisites to obtaining your homage."

" Oh, it would be too tedious to enumerate," said Edgar, with a smile ; " time would fail me to tell of the Marias, Cecilias, Lauras, and Julias, who have made an impression on my poor heart ; but they never could retain possession of it, as, fortunately for me, my flames have been as transient as they have been frequent."

Ellen felt infinitely above this attempt to wound her vanity, if, indeed, this speech was so intended by Edgar, as she could not help thinking, for he elevated his voice in uttering these words, so that they could not fail to reach her ear ; but she was only mortified for his sake, that he should use such contemptible weapons of offense.

Mrs. Herbert felt utterly unable longer to contain her indignation, at this display of vanity, as she considered it ; she remarked, " It is extremely fortunate that vain and idle young persons seldom suffer from the foolish fancies they call love ; so that we may venture to hope the Marias, Cecilias, and Lauras have also escaped unscathed."

Edgar Clifford turned toward Mrs. Herbert, with an air of profound attention ; and answered, with a look of the utmost gravity : " Compassion indeed would induce us to hope so, Madam, though I can scarcely venture to be so sanguine."

If a glance could kill, the look of ineffable scorn which Mrs.

Herbert darted upon Edgar would certainly have annihilated him ; but he seemed perfectly unconscious of its withering influence. Mrs. Herbert would freely have given the half of her estate to have told him she thought him a contemptible coxcomb ; but since she was obliged to deny herself this satisfaction, she resolutely compressed her lips, and preserved a contemptuous silence. Ellen, who knew by her countenance, that she was endeavoring to prepare another attack, as soon as an opportunity she deemed suitable offered, sought to distract her attention by consulting her as to the colors with which the parrot's wing she was working, should be shaded.

Mrs. Herbert did not possess one of those minds which can be occupied at the same time with many things ; and her attention was soon completely engrossed by the parrot, in the proper execution of which, she took as much interest as an artist in his most celebrated *chef-d'œuvre*. Ellen was pleased to see that her manœuvre had succeeded ; and she seemed so entirely engrossed in executing Mrs. Herbert's directions, that Edgar was piqued at her indifference ; for no change passed over that countenance, which was wont so clearly and truly to reflect every shade of feeling. A brief review of the last few months of her life, passed rapidly through Ellen's mind ; and she felt, with a bitter pang, how entirely the peace which once shed its halcyon influence over her heart, had been destroyed. There was now for her no repose of soul, no lying down amid the green pastures and still waters of tranquil meditation ; there was no more "sweet council" between her and those she most loved ; nothing of that playful and unrestrained interchange of thought, which is so delightful among our own familiar friends. Tormenting cares, perplexing doubts and anxieties, were her daily portion. Surrounded by those who were unspeakably dear to her, she experienced that isolation of soul, which arises from an absence of sympathy in those around you, a consciousness that you are every moment liable to become an object of distrust and disapprobation.

Ellen realized more painfully, every day, that the love and approbation of her friends had been to her almost as the breath

of life. Her self-reliance was weakened in proportion as she thought she had forfeited them, and she perceived, with deep regret and self-reproach, that she had looked too much to human support, instead of alone seeking strength from the Fountain of all strength. But her thoughts were perplexed, wavering, and uncertain ; when she sought to raise them to heaven, her earthly affections stood between her and her God, and she felt unable to offer up the sacrifice of a single heart. Doubts as to the strength and sincerity of her religious feelings oppressed her heart, and darkened her mind ; and though she strove to chain these painful thoughts within her own breast, she could not suppress the outward indications of mental suffering, which became often apparent to the attentive observer. On such occasions, if her depression attracted Mrs. Herbert's observation, it scarcely ever failed to meet a reproof, as evincing a state of mind unenlightened by the genuine doctrines, unsustained by the cheering and strengthening principles of Christianity. Ellen received these rebukes in silence ; for she often felt a deadness of heart, a dying of hope, which deprived her of all inclination to defend herself, especially as she thought Mrs. Herbert's reproofs were not entirely undeserved, and were perhaps meant for her benefit ; though she knew not that she was pouring gall rather than balm in the wounds she meant to heal. Sophia, too, blamed her dejection, when the symptoms of it became so strong, that Ellen could not entirely repress them—which was most frequently the case when they were alone together—and would often attempt to arouse her pride, and stimulate her to exertion, by representing to her, that Edgar would attribute the change in her spirits to a cause least flattering to herself—to the manifest alteration in his own conduct, the total disappearance of every mark of peculiar partiality, which accidental circumstances had once produced in his conduct toward her.

Ellen seldom attempted any reply to Sophia's accusations ; for she was wounded to the soul at the apparent good-humored indifference, with which Sophia offered suggestions to her mind, which she thought even a moderate share of consideration and sympathy would have induced her to repress ; as she could not

• help being conscious, not only that they were painful and mortifying, but also that their tendency was to increase the evil she threatened; for nothing could be better calculated to throw the most painful and embarrassed restraint over her manners to Edgar, than a consciousness that she might awaken such suspicions as Sophia had intimated.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

All in its rude and prickly bower,
That crimson rose how sweet and fair;
But love is far a sweeter flower
Amid life's thorny path of care.

BURNS.

MRS. HERBERT, after a stay of some days, left Woodbourne for Herbert Cottage, as she said important domestic avocations, imperatively required her presence at home. Edgar could scarcely conceal his pleasure at this movement, and Ellen, dearly as she loved Mrs. Herbert, at first experienced a sensation of relief, when she no longer met her cold, disapproving glance. But she reproached herself for this feeling, to one who had been to her a faithful friend even from childhood, and she found soon, too, that her own situation was scarcely less irksome than before. Sophia seemed to have settled it in her own mind, as it was prudent and expedient that all habits of familiar or intimate intercourse should be broken off between Edgar and Ellen, never to include Ellen in any of their plans of amusement, nor attempt to draw her into conversation. Edgar's manner, though always marked by that sort of politeness, which belongs to one who has been brought up with attention to all the most refined forms of good breeding, and has mingled from childhood in the most polished society, was often so cold and distant, that Ellen felt little inclined to make any advances toward establishing an easier or more familiar intercourse, especially as she knew such an attempt on her part would be misinterpreted by Sophia, if not by Edgar himself.

Ellen was sitting alone in the parlor one morning, when she was surprised at Sophia's abrupt entrance, equipped in her riding hat and shawl, and holding several papers in her hand.

"Where are you going, Sophia?" said Ellen.

"Oh, Edgar and I are going to ride over to Windsor, and bring

Olivia back with us, if she will come. I promised papa to copy these papers for him this morning, but it will now be impossible. Will you do it for me, if you please, Ellen?"

Now, Ellen thought that it would have been kind and natural that Sophia should have asked her to accompany them in their ride, particularly as she might have known, had she observed her, that she really stood in need of some refreshment and recreation; for she had scarcely been able to swallow a morsel at breakfast, and Sophia sate beside her; and Sophia was also in the room when she acknowledged to her father, in reply to his repeated interrogatories, that she felt unusually languid and unwell that morning, though she believed it to be only a temporary indisposition which a little exercise in the fresh air would remove. But she said nothing of what was passing in her mind, and simply taking the papers from Sophia's hand, replied that she would copy them as she requested; and, turning again to the open window, she looked out, as if entirely engrossed in the contemplation of the beautiful prospect without.

"Any message to Olivia?" said Sophia, drawing on her gloves.

"Only my love," said Ellen; "and tell her how very much I wish to see her."

As Ellen uttered these words, Edgar Clifford entered the sitting-room; he was surprised and disappointed at finding she was not to accompany them; he had, indeed, proposed the ride chiefly for her sake, for he had observed she looked languid and indisposed, and heard her reply to Mr. Clifford's inquiries respecting her health, that she thought a little exercise in the fresh air would remove her indisposition. He, therefore, inferred when he heard Ellen desire Sophia to tell Olivia how much she wished to see her, that she could have no other reason for not accompanying Sophia and himself in their morning ride, than a wish to avoid his society whenever she could do so without infringing the laws of politeness and kindness, or attracting observation to her conduct.

He did not doubt Ellen's love for him, for his penetrating eye read the workings of that guileless heart by a thousand signs so minute and so undefinable, that they could only have been understood by one so observant and deeply interested as himself; yet

he doubted whether this love would not be mastered by the high resolve of principle. He sometimes thought that Ellen would renounce him, even if he offered his hand to her acceptance; and this thought mortified and offended him as deeply as if his own conduct had deserved from her the utmost self-devotion.

"I will try her a little longer," he thought; "I will satisfy myself as to the nature and degree of her love, and then I will decide on my future course."

"Are you ready, Sophia?" said Edgar.

"Oh, yes, quite ready: adieu; *au revoir*, Ellen."

"Good-morning," replied Ellen.

There was something so sweet, and, as Edgar thought, so pensive, in the tone with which these words were uttered, that he felt for a minute a strong inclination to return and express his real sentiments toward her. But this was at present impossible, and he slowly and reluctantly moved away; he looked back at the window where Ellen was still standing, as she thought, unobserved, and he fancied he saw her pass her hand across her eyes, as if to brush away a tear.

He fell into so deep a reverie, that it was not until Sophia had repeatedly rallied him upon his abstraction, that he was able to recover himself sufficiently to assume the appearance of his wonted vivacity. Sophia was in fine spirits, and she ran on in a gay and thoughtless strain, without observing the effort it cost her companion to sustain his part in the conversation in a similar tone.

Ellen looked after Edgar and Sophia until a winding in the road hid them from her view; then, reproaching herself for her own weakness, for the thousandth time she resolved to conquer it, and for the thousandth time she found herself entangled in a labyrinth of painful and perplexing thoughts, as she tried to discover how far she was really blamable, and to form resolutions for her future conduct.

Ellen rose hastily, as if motion could arrest the current of painful and unprofitable musing—of self-reflection, which could lead to nothing, well expressed by the proverb, "Eat not thy heart." She seated herself immediately to the performance of the task she had

promised Sophia to accomplish ; but the wandering of her thoughts occasioned her to make so many blunders, that, when Edgar and Sophia returned from their morning ride, they found her still copying the papers.

"What, have you not finished, Ellen?" said Sophia. "I had no idea it would have occupied you so long to copy those tiresome papers."

"I am just finishing them now," replied Ellen.

"It is a good thing to have patience," said Sophia ; "I should have made a thousand mistakes, if I had attempted to copy them."

"I should suppose such an employment," said Edgar, "not very well adapted to remove the languor of which I heard you complain, or, rather, which I heard you acknowledge this morning to my uncle."

"Indeed, Ellen, I had forgotten that you were not well, when I made the request," said Sophia. "Why did you not refuse?"

Ellen could not help thinking how impossible it would be under similar circumstances for her to forget Sophia was not well, but she only said :

"It is of no consequence, Sophia. I am glad I have saved you a task you would have found it so difficult to accomplish. But, why did not Olivia return with you?"

"Edgar and I both tried our eloquence in vain ; she made some flimsy excuse about her father."

"I think Miss Granville sent Ellen a bouquet ; did she not?" said Edgar.

"Yes ; it is well you reminded me of it, or I should have forgotten it was not my own." Then taking it from her bosom, she presented it to Ellen.

The love of flowers had been from Ellen's childhood almost a passion with her, and this forgetfulness of her tastes struck her painfully as another proof of Sophia's indifference as to contributing to her pleasure. Olivia had selected Ellen's favorite flowers to form the bouquet ; they spoke to Ellen's heart with silent yet eloquent language, awakening so many sweet and tender associations, and the thought that these mute friends, at least, could

never disappoint nor wound her, that she unconsciously raised them to her lips, as she received them.

Sophia laughed, and said : " I dare say, Olivia had no idea her present would have been so warmly received. What fantasy is working in your brain, Ellen ? "

" I would not trouble you with all the foolish fantasies of my brain," said Ellen, coloring a little as she spoke. " Some of them are very dear to me, foolish as they may seem."

" Yes, I know they are ; but, for my part, I rejoice that I am not imaginative. It has saved me a great deal of trouble. Do you not think so, Edgar ? "

" Imagination is, doubtless, a source of much pain," he replied. " But then I would not willingly renounce its pleasures ; it would be like wishing to be deprived of sight, because your eye is often offended by disagreeable objects. I should, however, be careful to supply it with pleasing, rather than painful images ; otherwise, it is the cause of misery, often of madness, to the possessor."

" Indeed, I have seen it myself productive of so much harm," said Sophia, " that I should never wish to possess so dangerous a faculty. The realities of this world are very pleasant to me. I do not wish to see visions, nor dream dreams, out of which I might chance to be somewhat rudely awakened. But I must close the discussion, and go to disencumber myself of my riding dress and hat."

Sophia left the apartment, as she uttered these words, and Ellen hastily arranging the papers she had been copying, was preparing to follow her, when Edgar requested her to stop just a minute.

" Will you not give me a flower from your bouquet, Ellen ? I am, like yourself, a passionate admirer of flowers."

" Certainly," said Ellen, holding the bouquet toward him. " Select one for yourself ! "

" You will not, then, bestow it as your gift ? "

A slight blush passed over Ellen's cheek, as she thought Edgar perhaps supposed that she imagined he might attach some peculiar value to the flower as her gift, and therefore hesitated to bestow it. She therefore said quickly, and with a smile :

"You can not suppose that I am unwilling to give you a flower. What shall I give you?"

"Give me a rosebud, Ellen, and I will preserve it amongst my most precious relics!"

Ellen could not help suspecting from his tone and manner, that he attached some particular meaning to the request, and her first impulse was to refuse it; but a second thought told her it was simplest and best to appear to understand only the obvious import of his words; therefore, disengaging the rosebud from the bouquet, she presented it to him, together with a sprig of lily of the valley, saying, with some embarrassment, which she attempted to conceal under an appearance of carelessness: "Since you know how to prize the queen of flowers, I think you can not be insensible to the modest charms of the lily; they present the beauty of contrast, and should always accompany each other!"

Edgar received this gift with a bright smile, and placed it next his heart, saying: "The lily of the valley, speaks many sweet meanings in the silent but eloquent language of flowers; but the rose is precious above all!"

There was something so embarrassing to Ellen, in the tone and manner with which this speech was made, that she determined not to prolong the conversation. She said something about the necessity of comparing the papers she had been copying, with the original manuscript, as her father wanted them in the evening, and withdrew.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Yet this inconstancy is such,
As you too shall adore ;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

LOVELACE.

THERE are some situations in life, in which, though the present time is replete with trials and sufferings, still even amidst the sorrows each day brings with it, we dread so much those which we foresee the future has in store for us, that we regret the fleeting hours, laden as they may be with griefs and anxieties. This was now the state of Ellen Clifford's mind : for she feared that William's resolution was fixed, and that each day must draw closer the dreaded hour of his departure, to suffering, to conflict, perhaps to death itself ; and she knew, too, it was impossible but that this painful state of constraint, of coldness, of tormenting conflicts and variations of feeling, to which the circumstances in which she was placed with regard to Edgar gave rise, must at last terminate in total, perhaps eternal separation. "It is, perhaps, better we should part," she often mentally exclaimed, "but, at least, it shall not be in unkindness on my part. I will, at least, spare myself such bitter recollections." Her manner toward Edgar had almost involuntarily changed, as she became more fully aware of the real state of her own feelings ; and as her confidence was weakened, as it regarded the strength and nature of his love for herself. The purity and sincerity of her own affections, gave her no clew to the mysteries of a heart, where ambition, vanity, and self-indulgence mingled even in its strongest affections.

The long dreaded hour at length approached, and William Clifford, having obtained permission from his father to enter the army, announced to his family his resolution to depart speedily ;

as after such a resolve, each day would only prolong the pain of parting, and give time to dwell upon and exaggerate every painful circumstance. Sophia endeavored to dissuade him from his purpose, sometimes by raillery, sometimes by tears, and then she would appeal to his love for his family; but William, though visibly affected, remained firm and immovable in his resolution. Ellen listened, with a cheek pale as marble, and emotion too deep for tears; and William felt almost unable to look at the expression of deep sorrow on her face, without betraying how strongly he felt the regret which must be inseparable in such cases, from a strong degree of natural affection. And with him this step also involved a renunciation of the dearest and most cherished hopes of his heart, as it regarded his earthly happiness.

Ellen was so well acquainted with her brother's principles, and the exalted views of duty, and motives of patriotism, which impelled him to devote himself to the cause of his country, that even could she have hoped to shake his resolution, by an appeal to his feelings, she would not have felt justified in doing so. She knew that William regarded the great ends of life, as far more valuable than life itself; and though when the hour came, in which the principles that had formed and given strength to his character were to be tested, her heart bled, and she thought, sensitively as her womanly nature shrank from the perils of war, she would gladly have met its dangers, could her presence have shielded him; yet she uttered no word of remonstrance, but raised her thoughts in silent prayers to Heaven, to strengthen and sustain him.

One task still remained unperformed, and William Clifford felt it impossible to leave home and all that he held most dear, without removing this heavy burden from his heart. He must see Mr. Granville before his departure, and he should decide whether or not it was best for him to see Olivia, perhaps for the last time. Without acquainting any one but Ellen with his design, he set out to put it into execution. As he approached nearer to Windsor, his heart beat thicker and faster, and he almost doubted the wisdom of his own resolution; yet he felt hurried on by an

irresistible impulse, and feelings of so mixed a nature, that he would have found it difficult to say whether pain or pleasure predominated in them. But he felt comparatively calm, after having ascertained from one of the servants, that Olivia had gone to spend the day at Herbert Cottage, and that Mr. Granville, was at home, and alone.

The sitting room which he entered was entirely unoccupied, a volume lay open on the table, which he recollected to have recommended to Olivia's perusal. He opened it at a passage he had once read aloud to her. It was marked, he could scarcely doubt by herself; a withered rose lay between the leaves; though completely dried he knew it to be a white Provence rose, and he remembered during the rose season of the last year, he had brought a flower of this very kind to Olivia from some distance, in consequence of her having expressed a peculiar fondness for this kind of rose. A deep sigh escaped him at these memorials; every thing around looked unchanged, and yet he felt that a sentence of eternal separation was pronounced between him and her he loved. At this moment he would have found consolation in the assurance that Olivia was indifferent to him, as this would produce the certainty that she could never feel the bitter pangs he then experienced. He would not indulge the fond thoughts that thronged on his memory, but hastily rang the bell for a servant, whom he desired to inform Mr. Granville, that Mr. William Clifford was in the sitting room, and would be glad to see him, if he was well and disengaged.

Some minutes elapsed before Mr. Granville obeyed the summons, and when he entered, William was concerned to observe the deep seriousness expressed in his countenance, and somewhat hurt at the cold politeness of his manner, which he knew to be only a veil for displeasure and disapprobation.

"You must excuse me, Mr. Clifford," he said, "for not having obeyed your summons immediately; I was just concluding a letter upon important business, and a messenger was waiting for it."

"I am sorry," replied William, without appearing to observe the coldness and formality of Mr. Granville's manner, "that you should think any apology necessary to me."

"We are now so rarely honored with your company, that I can scarcely think it proper, to allow myself in the uncereceremonious familiarity, which once seemed natural enough in those who scarcely ever spent two days without meeting. But I will not weary you by a theme which must be tedious and unprofitable. Did you leave the family at Woodbourne well, Mr. Clifford?"

"As well as usual, I believe. But, Mr. Granville, this is no time for coldness, for formality, or concealment; we meet this morning, perhaps, for the last time."

Mr. Granville absolutely started and turned pale. "What am I to understand by this?" he said, in a voice of surprise and natural emotion.

"Our difference in political opinions, I have long perceived with inexpressible pain, has raised a barrier between us. Yet I should not say *us*, because, for my own part, I utterly disclaim any alienation of feeling toward you; but I know that my course has excited your disapprobation and displeasure; yet, deeply as I felt this, it was impossible for me to alter my conduct or opinions, since they were both under the guidance of principles—of holy, of unchangeable truths, as they appear to me."

Mr. Granville groaned aloud. "What is to be the end," he exclaimed, "of this wretched infatuation—this political fanaticism? Surely, William Clifford, you will not raise your hand against the mother that bore you."

"To see my country as great, as glorious, as free, as a prophetic voice whispers to my heart she will be, I would gladly shed every drop of my heart's best blood." And the bright glow of enthusiasm, which shone in William's eye, and kindled on his cheek, showed how deeply and truly he felt the sentiments he uttered.

"I could not have believed that your madness would have risen to this desperate extremity. Think what you are doing; for God's sake, consider what you are about, before you commit the awful sin of rebellion, and unite yourself to a hopeless cause. The gibbet, and not the battle-field, may be the termination of such a conflict."

William Clifford's countenance assumed its usual calm and

thoughtful expression, as he replied : " I have thought, I have considered deeply, through the silent watches of many a night. I see clearly the dangers to which I am exposed ; the horrible and disgraceful termination, as the world would deem it, which may await my career ; yet there are considerations, which have had far more weight in weakening my heart, and palsying my determination of devoting myself to the great cause, than even these."

" And pray, what may these considerations be ? It would be well to ponder them, if they can be attended with so good an effect, as to make you falter in a course, which leads to rebellion, perhaps to ruin, disgrace, and death."

William hesitated, ere he replied : " I know not whether you have ever suspected the existence in my heart of love toward your daughter, which has grown from my childhood, until it has become a part of my nature. I feel that it can not be eradicated ; but I also am aware, that the path to which duty and honor calls me, forbids me to cherish or avow these sentiments. I could not ask Olivia to marry a man who may end his days on the gallows ; whose name may be a mark for the finger of scorn —for I too well know, that the voice of the world pronounces on our actions from their success, rather than their motives. She is, too, the treasure of your life ; in whom you have garnered up the warmest affections of your heart ; and love, friendship, and honor, alike demand of me to bury feelings, for which consideration for her happiness and yours, would forbid me to seek or ask reciprocation, in eternal silence ; yet to you, at least, I thought this avowal might be made, as an explanation of my conduct, which must have appeared equivocal and unkind."

The tone of deep feeling with which William uttered these words, and the expression of an eye which spoke how much of sorrow and tenderness was mingled in the high and stern resolves of his heart, touched Mr. Granville deeply ; and something very much like a tear glistened in his eye ; but if that mark of weakness were indeed there, it was so speedily brushed away as to efface every trace of it. After clearing his throat two or three times, he said : " You are my own noble boy, after all, William ;

you are not cold-hearted and fickle, as I have lately thought you. But I am almost sorry that you have undeceived me, as I was learning not to care about you ; and as you are bent on this obstinate, misguided course, it would be better that we should forget you. Can nothing remove this horrible infatuation ? If the scales could fall from your eyes, and you could recover your reason, I would rather have you for a son-in-law, than the first prince in Europe. Can you not, at least, take a longer time to consider, before you rush to destruction ?”

William shook his head mournfully ; then extending his hand to Mr. Granville, he grasped it warmly in his own, saying, “ Were I to renounce my principles, misguided and deluded as you think them, I should forfeit not only my self-respect but yours ; I should be unworthy of the greatest earthly happiness ; but yet I have no words to express my thankfulness, for the proof of regard you have just given me, in the words you have uttered. These words will be my solace in many an hour of sorrow, of suffering, of peril ; but I dare not think of them otherwise than as a precious consolation, for the sacrifices I feel myself called on to make. It is, perhaps, as you say, better that both Olivia and yourself should forget me ; and I have long been so fully persuaded of this, that regardless of the pain it cost me to renounce an intercourse so necessary to my happiness, I have steadily pursued a course, which I knew would make me appear to you both, cold-hearted, ungrateful, and fickle. I thought my resolution on this subject was unalterable ; but when the hour of trial approached, other views presented themselves to me—suggested, perhaps, by the weakness of my own heart—and I thought it might be permitted me, to lay open my heart to one of my oldest and best friends, before a separation which may be eternal. You will think of me, perhaps, with some kind feelings—deluded, misguided, infatuated as you may deem me.”

Mr. Granville was visibly affected ; he turned to the window to conceal his emotion ; and after a pause of some minutes, replied : “ I see it is utterly vain to contend with you. I could as soon hope to soften a rock by my eloquence, or to stop the north wind by commanding it to cease. I, too, nourished fond hopes,

which you have destroyed. God has never blessed me with a son, and I looked to you as the prop of a desolate old age, as the protector of my daughter, when my head was laid low in the grave. And yet, like Balaam, I feel myself constrained to bless, when I could wish that my heart would permit me to curse you. Fatal, deluded, rash, as the course is you are about to take, I can never cease to think of you with kindness, and to hope that you may yet be brought to see your error."

"I dare not trust myself to say farewell to Olivia, nor can I even ask you to offer her any explanation of my conduct. Will you bid her farewell for me? will you tell her how earnestly I wish her happiness? so truly, so earnestly, that I would not even ask her to remember me, if that recollection should bring back painful associations; tell her—but I forget myself," he added; "say only to her what you think best."

Mr. Granville brushed away a tear; then said: "I will tell her that you sent your adieus, your wishes for her happiness. You are right; this conduct is what I should have expected of you. If nothing can alter your determination, it is best you should not meet again, for several reasons. But I scarcely know how to part with you thus. Can you not promise me, my son, once again to consider before you finally decide?"

William had never before seen Mr. Granville's haughty spirit thus bowed down. It was no light sorrow, he knew, which could cause his eyes to fill with tears, or his voice to falter with emotion. He feared lest his own firmness should be shaken; and, rising quickly, he approached Mr. Granville, and, taking his hand, pressed it closely between both his own. "It can not be, my father, for as such I shall always love and consider you; if you knew what is passing now in my heart, you would cease to urge me. May God bless you and yours. Farewell—farewell." Again he pressed Mr. Granville's hand with an almost convulsive pressure; and, without trusting himself to look again in his face, he turned hastily, and was gone.

Mr. Granville's farewell died away on his lips. He walked to the window and looked after William Clifford, until he could see him no longer, and tears rolled fast down his furrowed cheeks,

though he despised himself for the weakness he could not conquer.

It would be difficult to describe Olivia's feelings when she returned, and Mr. Granville, as cautiously as he could, informed her of William's departure, of his adieus, of his wishes for her happiness. He did not allude to the declaration William had made respecting his love for her; indeed, though he knew not the state of Olivia's affections, he was not without apprehension that she had already bestowed them where they could meet with no return, which would not add to her unhappiness. "The subject was so painful," he said, "he did not wish to dwell further upon it. To see such a young man as William Clifford become the victim of these cursed and wicked delusions, which the rebels called liberty, was enough to induce a man to take refuge in Turkey. Absolute despotism was at least preferable to the anarchy in which this country was about to be plunged." He found some relief in execrating Richard Clifford's folly in permitting his son to take such a course, and in heartily cursing the Whigs, and consigning them to destruction.

The blow struck too deeply into Olivia's heart to enable her to make any reply to her father. She felt stunned and sick; and, after remaining silent until Mr. Granville had exhausted himself in invective, she rose and wished him good-night. He hoped, from her silence and apparent calmness, that she had not felt this stroke so severely as he had feared she would; but, had he known the sickness, the withering of hope in her bosom, he would have found no consolation in her silence.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

But still I must
Look back. I pray you think of me.

BYRON.

LIFE has but few moments of such bitterness of feeling as William Clifford experienced when the last glimpse of Windsor faded from his view ; and he felt as if the sentence of eternal separation between Olivia and himself was irrevocably pronounced. He was likewise deeply affected at parting with Mr. Granville ; and had his nature been less firm, less noble, his resolution must have sunk beneath the painful conflict of feeling. But he was strong in the spirit of Christian heroism, and even in this trying moment he wavered not.

We will not attempt to describe the farewell scene at Woodbourne. Mrs. Herbert and Edgar were the only individuals of the large group that composed the scene—for all the servants had come to take leave of their young master—who preserved their composure, though from very different causes. Even Mr. Walton choked in the midst of a Latin quotation, with which he had designed bidding William adieu, in the most appropriate and classical manner. Mrs. Herbert was calm, partly as an example of firmness to rebuke the weakness of others : it was not that she did not love William ; on the contrary, she felt a strong affection for him—in her way ; but she possessed unusual powers of self-command, not only derived from the principles she entertained, but from the assistance of nature, which had gifted her with iron nerves, slow sensibilities, and an imagination which, like a plane mirror, reflected truly the objects presented before it, without diminishing, magnifying, or multiplying them. She had adopted the Whig views to their fullest extent ; and with her, opinions waited only opportunities to ripen into action ; she therefore admired and applauded William's determination, and with a tear-

less eye and firm voice, as she returned the farewell pressure of his hand, gave him her parting blessing, and wished that her sons were old enough to draw their swords with him in the holy cause of liberty.

Edgar beheld the parting scene unmoved, and extended his hand to his cousin, perhaps for the last time, with the same graceful composure which generally characterized all his actions and movements; for he felt no sympathy for what he regarded, at best, as the mere delusions of a heated brain, arising from crude political theories, from vain Utopian dreams, which could never be realized, and even could they be, presented nothing to charm his imagination or touch his heart. Nurtured in all the pride of birth and indulgences of wealth, in the midst of a polished and exclusive state of society, he shrank with disgust and contempt from opinions and measures which would tend to change and overthrow those marked lines of distinction, which separated the privileged classes from the common herd, whom he regarded as destined by nature for hewers of wood and drawers of water, to the end of time. He could have smiled at William's enthusiasm as ridiculous; but the serious step he had taken excited in his mind too much of disapprobation and contempt, to allow the lighter emotion of ridicule to exercise itself; and his indignation at his uncle's folly, in permitting such a measure, was scarcely less than what he felt toward William himself.

Even Ellen's sorrow, meek and quiet as it was, at William's departure, irritated and wearied him; for, though all abstractly admire sensibility, particularly in those whose love we desire, because we consider it as an evidence of the richness of the treasure we wish to possess, yet when it is manifested deeply, or long, wholly for another, the selfish feel themselves wearied and almost injured by it. They would gladly occupy exclusively the sensibilities of all in whom they are interested.

"Why do I linger here?" Edgar would often exclaim, mentally; "it is folly, it is madness; I am only injuring my future prospects by thus continuing the inmate of a family who have openly joined the rebel cause; and I am well aware, in so doing, I shall draw down the disapprobation of my father upon my head,

and excite suspicions in other quarters, which may hereafter be injurious to my advancement. And all for what? Could I marry Ellen, even if she loves me? and if she does love me, what cold, what divided affection! Is a heart worth possessing, whose religious creeds, moral principles of a strictness that belong not to this world—for they could never be put in practice here—local attachments, family affections, strive for mastery? I could not be satisfied with so divided an empire. I must reign alone. When such sacrifices are necessary on my part, I have a right to demand this in return. This state of things can not last much longer. And, yet, why did my perverse fate lead me to cross the Atlantic, to find the only woman I could ever have loved, and yet oppose insuperable obstacles to our union? What blind fools are we to talk of the guidance of Providence; of Divine interposition in the affairs of men, overruling them for good—vain dream of enthusiasts!"

It would be vain to attempt to describe what Ellen felt at the separation from her brother; though she sought as much as possible to conceal and subdue her feelings for her father's sake, and for Edgar's too, for she feared the shade of gloom cast over the family would make his time pass irksomely away; and her reason told her that time must be speedily coming to an end. She was deeply hurt at Edgar's total want of sympathy in their grief for the departure of William Clifford; for the delicacy and truth of her perceptions made known to her many hidden secrets of those hearts, whose mysteries she sought to penetrate. Indeed, many painful convictions respecting Edgar were daily forcing themselves, with the irresistible strength of truth, upon her mind; though it was with anguish she yielded to them. Could the bright hopes she once indulged, that the germs of nobleness and excellence, which she thought his character contained, would be developed by the genial influence of religion, and the elevated moral feeling which must necessarily spring from it, again arise within her heart, she believed that she could reconcile herself to the idea of separation from him; and so disinterested was the nature of Ellen's affection, that since the obstacles placed by religious principle and duty to her father, on her side—by filial

obedience on his—to their union, appeared insurmountable, notwithstanding the bitterness which must mingle with such a conviction, she would have been relieved by the assurance, that Edgar entertained no sentiments of peculiar tenderness toward herself.

On this point, however, she found it impossible to maintain any fixed opinion; as Edgar's conduct was so variable and inconsistent; but the inference was unavoidable—that if he indeed felt an attachment for her, it must be wholly of a selfish character, as he must be conscious the course he pursued must be destructive of her happiness, if she loved him. But she avoided this inference, by supposing him unconscious of the nature of her feelings toward him. When she thought of William, her sorrow on his account was softened by her confidence in the purity of his intentions; the loftiness and rectitude of his heart; she knew that he looked for strength where none can look in vain; and even when her tears flowed fastest, at the thought of the dangers and trials to which he would be exposed, she felt that she could commit him into the hands of her God and his God, and the balm of consolation mingled in the cup of her sorrow. But regret, self-reproach, painful anticipations of the future, doubt, and uncertainty, mingled their painful and depressing influences when she thought of Edgar. Her heart was oppressed with a weight whose deadening pressure she bore with patience, but could not throw off; and she felt it crushing within her the elasticity, the energy of spirit, which can alone enable us to struggle successfully against misfortune.

A few days after William Clifford's departure, Mr. Granville was attacked by a severe fit of the gout, and Ellen insisted on sharing with Olivia the office of nurse. Mr. Clifford felt uneasiness at her undergoing the fatigue of this occupation, as he thought from the increasing delicacy of her appearance that she was scarcely able to undertake it; but as Mr. Granville and Olivia seemed to derive so much pleasure and consolation from Ellen's presence on such occasions, he would not object to her spending a few days at Windsor, though he exacted a promise from Ellen of sparing herself as much as possible. He would

gladly have assisted in rendering all the little offices, so necessary in sickness, to his suffering friend, but it was evident that his presence was irritating and painful to Mr. Granville, and he therefore feared it might prove injurious. Indeed, Mr. Granville could not forgive Richard Clifford for having permitted his son to take so rash and misguided a step; and since his parting interview with William, his old regard for him had returned so strongly, mingled with a respect and admiration for his firmness, which, to preserve consistency, in his own eyes, he would not have avowed even to himself, that he felt inclined to visit upon Richard Clifford's head, the measure of wrath due to both their offenses.

But it was impossible to transfer any portion of anger to Ellen; every tone and look spoke so truly the love and sympathy, which dwelt within her heart, and her whole appearance evinced so plainly the depth of the suffering she had undergone, that Mr. Granville felt softened by her presence, and soothed by her gentle ministrations. This change of scene, though gloomy, Ellen felt beneficial to her mind, since it diverted in some measure, the current of her thoughts from their accustomed channels; and to be able, in any measure, to alleviate or share the sufferings of those she loved, was always balm to her spirit.

Edgar found her absence inexpressibly irksome, and he was likewise offended that Ellen should willingly withdraw herself from Woodbourne, when she had reason to believe that circumstances would ere long call him back to England, and she might well regard such a separation as final.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Indifferent thou tramplest in the dust
Their happiness who most are thine. The god
Whom thou dost serve is no benignant deity.
Like as the blind, irreconcilable,
Fierce element, incapable of compact,
Thy heart's wild impulse only dost thou follow.

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

It happened, that the brother whom Mr. Morton crossed the Atlantic to visit, was an old acquaintance of Lord Fitz-Claire's, and one to whom his Lordship had always shown much attention, as he possessed considerable political influence, and a knowledge of men and things, which made him both a useful and entertaining companion, as long as he had sufficient strength and spirits for conversation. Though his health had now become such as to render him incapable of affording any longer pleasure to his guests, Lord Fitz-Claire, from a regard to appearances, still sometimes honored him with a morning call, to inquire personally after his health, and much credit should have been given him for his exertion, for a sick-room was, of all places on earth, most abhorrent to him.

In one of these morning calls, Lord Fitz-Claire met with Mr. Morton, from Virginia ; and upon finding that he had been a resident near Richard Clifford, his curiosity was excited, and his interest awakened, as to many circumstances respecting his brother's family, of which he would never have thought of inquiring, before Edgar Clifford's residence at Woodbourne had given its inmates some importance in his estimation. There was a refined elegance, and degree of dignity in Lord Fitz-Claire's manner, which involuntarily excited admiration and respect, and his conversational powers, at once polished and enriched by as-

sociation with all that was noblest in soul, or highest in fashion, or profoundest and most acute in intellect, aided by extensive reading, and those gifts of nature, beside which all the best assistance of art and appliances of education fade in lustre, like bits of colored glass before the lustre of the diamond ; a brilliant imagination, subtlety and clearness of thought ; a flow of eloquence, bright, copious, and clear, as the mountain stream, which sparkles and gushes from its inexhaustible though hidden reservoir, imparted to his conversation an inexpressible power of fascination, when he chose to exert his powers of pleasing.

Mr. Morton felt and acknowledged the rare gifts and rich acquirements of Lord Fitz-Clare's mind, and the charm of his manner and conversation ; yet to those who possess a natural character, and genuine warmth and tenderness of heart, the want of heart in others can not be wholly concealed—a void, a want will be felt. He involuntarily contrasted the brothers in his mind ; and Lord Fitz-Clare would have been surprised to have known that he suffered loss in the comparison. He saw in Mr. Morton a man of strong natural sense, cultivated not only by research in the rich stores of classic literature, but by a careful study of the best English authors ; his powers of thought and reasoning strongly developed by the nature of his studies, and a sort of newness and freshness of mind, imparted by a residence in a recently settled country, which impressed him with a species of interest, the stronger from its novelty. Like most persons who possess unusual powers of mind, Lord Fitz-Clare took much satisfaction in conversing with those whom he thought capable of comprehending and appreciating him ; and it would have excited general surprise among his acquaintances, to have known the pleasure which he felt in the society of an obscure clergyman from the colonies, of manners, habits, tastes, and principles so entirely dissimilar from his own.

Though, as we have said before, Mr. Morton appreciated duly the powers of Lord Fitz-Clare's mind, and enjoyed the charms of his conversation, yet the warmth and kindness of Richard Clifford's manner, the natural and easy flow of his conversation, which bore so strongly the impress of feeling and truth, that it

possessed something of the sweetest of all attractions—the simplicity of childhood—while the strength and originality of his mind, prevented the idea of weakness, which we are so apt to associate with that of simplicity, from arising in the minds of his auditors ; all these qualities presented themselves in advantageous contrast with those of Lord Fitz-Clare, in Mr. Morton's mind.

In answer to Lord Fitz-Clare's inquiries respecting Richard Clifford and his family, Mr. Morton gave a rapid but touching narrative of the difficulties with which Mr. Clifford and his young wife had to contend, on their first settlement in Virginia. He described the energy and perseverance with which his brother had contended against the difficulties of his situation ; Ellen's sweetness and patience, her unwearied efforts in her own sphere of action to second the exertions of her husband, for the welfare of their family. How forcibly did Mr. Morton's description recall to Lord Fitz-Clare's mind, the image of the only woman he had ever loved ; and the momentary thought flashed across his mind, of how different his own character and destiny might have been, had he been united to such a woman as Ellen. Albeit unused to tender reflections, Lord Fitz-Clare instantly checked the current of his thoughts, as soon as he became aware whither they were carrying him, and inwardly rebuked his own momentary weakness of feeling.

Mr. Morton described the influence which Richard and Ellen Clifford gained on all around them ; how the streams of love and good-will which flowed from their hearts over every living thing, softened the woes of the suffering, and poured the spirit of gladness over their social and domestic circle. As Mr. Morton went on to tell the wonders wrought by Ellen's taste in her wild forest home, and the manner in which she sought to form the characters of her children, and impart to them such knowledge as could be learned more advantageously from the lessons of a mother, than from those of a preceptor, Lord Fitz-Clare could not help contrasting the mind and character of Ellen Clifford with those of Lady Fitz-Clare, and all the faults in the education of his children, the consequences of which were continually developing,

and many of which were attributable to himself, were rested upon the head of his wife. Lord Fitz-Clare's inquiries did not tend to tranquilize his mind ; for the answers Mr. Morton gave, made him fear that his brother's house was a dangerous abode for his son. The political views of Richard Clifford and his son, had, ever since he had become acquainted with them, though imperfectly, through the medium of Edgar's letters, been a formidable objection to his son's residence at the house of his uncle ; but now that opportunities were presented for those views to ripen into action, Edgar's remaining in Virginia was to be thought of no longer. A new source of danger, too, in such a residence now, for the first time, presented itself to his imagination. Mr. Morton's description of the characters, understandings, mental and personal attractions of Richard Clifford's daughters, particularly of Ellen, who, he said, possessed striking traits of resemblance to her mother, both in mind and person, awakened strong fears in Lord Fitz-Clare's mind, as it respected the danger of his son's present situation.

He had always traced in Edgar many traits of character, and a turn of mind strikingly similar to his own ; and, consequently, his hopes rested most strongly on him of all his children. His dreams of ambition, his thoughts of pride, were chiefly on Edgar ; and the strongest degree of affection, which a heart could feel, so much under the dominion of selfish and worldly influences, was bestowed on his favorite son. The delicate health, gentle temper, and unambitious character of his eldest son, Francis, created in his mind a sensation of contemptuous pity toward him, and the manifestation of this feeling—sometimes almost unconsciously on his part, because there was no intuitive prompting of the heart to forbid him to inflict a wound on the feelings of another—had the effect of increasing the evil, and produced a painful sense of depression and discouragement in the mind of Francis. Under more kindly and fostering influences, his character might have developed much that was not only lovely, but estimable and useful, and his mind might have exhibited faculties which, though they would never have enabled him to command armies, or lead senates, might have embellished the lighter

departments of literature, adorned the walks of private life, and graced the highest circles of polished society.

But Lord Fitz-Clare had neither the patience, the love, nor the humility, necessary to sustain the weak, to call forth the colors and fragrance of the hidden and lowly flower, by the beams of kindness, and the smiles of encouragement. Edgar Clifford's vigorous mind, his fertile imagination, the natural and easy graces of his manner, were sources of pride and pleasure to Lord Fitz-Clare, and he spared no pains to improve talents which promised to yield a quick and abundant harvest in return.

The natural delicacy of Francis's constitution appeared to increase, and though no fatal symptom had as yet manifested itself, declining health was so strongly marked in his appearance, that Lord Fitz-Clare began to regard it as an increasing probability, that Edgar would become the heir to his fortune and honors.

The train of thought, which Mr. Morton's narrative awakened, forcibly recalled his own early history to Lord Fitz-Clare's mind ; and he wondered that he should not have foreseen the dangers incident to Edgar's present situation, if the present Ellen Clifford inherited the beauty, the mind, and the character of her mother. And the description which Mr. Morton gave of her, bore so striking a resemblance to that image, which neither time, nor years of separation, nor worldly cares, nor evil passions had effaced from his memory ; he knew the peril of his son's heart was so serious, that he could not delay making an effort immediately to withdraw him from such a situation.

As soon as he returned home he wrote a long letter to his son, and his spells in summoning evil spirits to his influence, were as potent as those of the most famed enchanters of old ; he tried to rouse the demons of vanity, of ambition, of worldly-mindedness to his aid, if, perchance, they slept in Edgar's bosom. He alluded to the declining state of health of his elder son, in a manner which showed plainly, that he thought all the future greatness and honors of the house, would devolve upon Edgar. He spoke of the bright hopes which he had always entertained from his career ; of the labors, the cares, the anxious thoughts he had bestowed on his improvement, and drew, in the most glowing colors,

a picture of the splendid destiny which awaited him, could he only be persuaded to be true to himself. He enlarged, on the other hand, on the disadvantages of his present residence, in an obscure colony in a state of rebellion; in a family, too, who had espoused the rebel cause, and which must, consequently, be a serious disadvantage to him, as he would not only be obliged to share the odium of their principles, but might be involved in the penalties of their rebellion. He warned him, too, of the evil consequences which would result, should he be so far misled by the illusions of fancy, as to think of forming an alliance in his uncle's family, and urged him, if any such idea or wish should have arisen in his mind, to renounce it, and return to England immediately, on pain of his eternal displeasure. The latter part of this epistle, though couched in very decided terms, was, nevertheless, so worded as to convey the idea, that his opposition to such an alliance, would arise from the unalterable conviction of the many disadvantages with which it would be attended to Edgar himself.

Lord Fitz-Clare intrusted this letter to the care of an officer who was about to embark with the troops for New York, and who offered to undertake that it should be safely conveyed to the place of destination. Since this apprehension had filled his mind, every day seemed an age to him. He recollected so vividly the strength of his own youthful emotions, when, for the first and last time, a sentiment of love had been awakened in his mind, that he dreaded lest the spirits, which he had endeavored to conjure up, should be found too weak to dissolve the charm which he feared already bound Edgar to Virginia. He read again his son's old letters, to see if any casual expression, any incidental remark betrayed a growing passion; for he knew Edgar too well to imagine that he should find any open declaration, or even the self-betrayal of a naturally ingenuous mind, when from motives of policy it seeks concealment. But he prided himself on being able to decipher hidden thoughts, from signs so undefinable and minute that they failed to attract the attention of an ordinary observer. He looked in vain, however, for such signs in these letters, as Edgar's caution was, in this instance, fully equal to

his father's penetration ; yet he closed them without having his doubts and fears removed, for he was aware that he had never possessed the confidence of any human being but that of his unsuspecting brother ; and he relied solely on his own address and penetration for discovering the secrets of the hearts of his own children.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

My heart revolts within me, and two voices
Make themselves audible within my bosom.
My soul's benighted; I no longer can
Distinguish the right track.
 My mind moves to and fro.
I know not what to do.

COLERIDGE'S *Wallenstein*.

ELLEN remained with Olivia to assist her in nursing Mr. Granville until his physician pronounced him to be out of danger. Though she felt an increase of bodily lassitude from her exertions, yet she perceived that her mind was invigorated, as circumstances had forcibly given a new direction to her thoughts and feelings. Olivia did not once mention nor allude to William, and Ellen observed the same silence on this subject; but they both found relief in being together, because they understood each other's hearts, and knew how deeply they were engrossed by the same object. This was a strong, though silent bond of sympathy.

Mr. Clifford insisted that Sophia should take Ellen's place for a few days, at least until Olivia recovered in some measure from her fatigue; and though her uneasiness respecting Mr. Granville was in a great measure removed, still his situation and the peculiarity of his temper, made him require so many attentions, and Mr. Clifford urged Olivia with so much kindness to accept Sophia's assistance, that she could not refuse. Her own inclinations would have seconded Mr. Clifford's persuasions, but that she knew Sophia neither would nor could accommodate herself to Mr. Granville's tastes and humors as Ellen had done, and that her company would probably have the effect of increasing his impatience and irritation; then Sophia herself required amusement, which she knew she had not the spirits to afford.

On her return to Woodbourne, Ellen found no one to receive her, as her father had gone to see a sick neighbor, but Edgar

Clifford. He met her with an air of more than usual kindness, but of deep dejection, and walked by her side until they reached the house, without uttering a syllable, except to inquire after her health.

They entered the library together ; the refreshing breeze, which often springs up toward the close of a summer evening, gently stirred the leaves, producing that sweet and soothing melody which speaks with such mysterious harmony to the hearts of the feeling and the imaginative. The air was laden with odors of jessamine, mignonnette, and all the sweet-scented tribe of mid-summer ; the gay caroling of the birds, the varied and magnificent prospect which lay before them, clad in all its leafy honors, suggested only images of gladness. But the spirit must be attuned to joy to receive such images, otherwise they jar more painfully from the very contrast of external nature to the spiritual world within—that awful nature from which we might well shrink appalled, did we not know that He by whom we are so fearfully and wonderfully made, can control and direct this hidden world of wonders.

Ellen and Edgar looked out on the fair scene before them without one thought of its beauty. Ellen felt as if some crisis was approaching which she feared to hasten ; and Edgar seemed plunged in deep thought, though from time to time he cast a glance upon Ellen so sad, so searching, that her eye fell beneath his ; for she felt as if he, indeed, possessed the power to read her very soul. At last, Edgar said, with a tone which fell like an icebolt on Ellen's heart : " The blow is at length struck which I have so long seen suspended over me, and I find myself weaker than I had believed possible ; yet I may be pardoned for renouncing with unutterable anguish the brightest dream of happiness which ever dawned upon me ; though, perhaps, it lived only in the delusions of fancy. The time is at hand, Ellen, when I must bid you an eternal adieu ! "

The paleness of death overspread Ellen's face, and she fixed her eyes upon Edgar Clifford without uttering a syllable, but with an expression that spoke more anguish than the loudest exclamations of grief could have done. She had thought that she

had prepared herself for an event, to which she had for some time endeavored to look forward, as being inevitable ; but there are hours of trial which no previous thought can enable us to realize, and for which no previous resolution can arm us.

" I have received letters from my father, commanding me to leave this place immediately, under pain of his eternal displeasure, to set out, as soon as this letter was received, for New York, and embark for England. But still I am bound here ; I can scarcely resolve to leave you, Ellen, though honor, ambition, and duty, as you would consider it, call me home ; and though I feel daily more strongly the disadvantages—I might almost say the degradation, of my present position—when I reflect on the station which a son of Lord Fitz-Claire's should occupy—to reside in a colony engaged in a rebellion which my soul abhors, against my king and country, is scarcely safe or honorable, ; and yet I have scarcely the strength left to make the effort to tear myself away from it. And what, Ellen, has been the reward of my love, of my sacrifices ? Can I even say that I possess a share in a divided heart ?"

Painful, mixed, and indescribable, were the emotions which this speech aroused in Ellen's heart ; and deep as was the grief she felt at their approaching separation, she felt still more deeply the pain of acknowledging to herself that Edgar had sought to address her feelings in a manner that was neither just, generous, nor sincere. " What could it avail you to know ?" at length she said. " Ask your own heart, Edgar, what reason I have had to think that you made sacrifices for me ?—but it is worse than vain *now* to speak of what is past. Let the past be forgotten forever ; the voice of duty calls you where a bright career opens before you, and where my best wishes, my kindest thoughts, will attend you !"

" My conduct may have appeared strange, unkind, inconsistent, Ellen ; but you know nothing of the conflicts of my heart—the difficulties of my situation. And now, even now, almost at the parting moment, you ask me, coldly, what reasons you have had to suppose that I ever made sacrifices for you ; and tell me, calmly, the voice of duty calls me ; and assure me, as you would

a common acquaintance, that your good wishes and kind thoughts will attend me ! And is it for this I have lingered here for months, though I knew that every motive of interest, of ambition, urged me to go ? Is this the return for having lavished on you the deepest, the warmest feelings of my heart ?”

“Forbear, Edgar,” said Ellen ; “why thus add to the bitterness of parting by reproaches ? and why should we part in unkindness ? You reproach me with coldness, with want of feeling, yet your heart must disclaim the words your lips uttered. I ask no explanation of the strangeness, the unkindness, of your conduct ; nor need I say that I forgive it—forgiveness is but a poor word to express my feelings. In my heart exists not one shadow of resentment toward you, but wishes so strong, both for your temporal and eternal happiness, that, were opportunities ever to arise to call them into action, it would be impossible for you to doubt either their depth or their sincerity.”

Edgar felt it indeed impossible to doubt, as he looked at Ellen, and for a moment he resolved to renounce all his dreams of ambition, all the allurements of pleasure, of wealth, and fashion—his father, his country, his rank—for her sake ; and to offer her his hand, and pledge himself to reside with her in America, if these were the only terms upon which she would consent to accept it. But Edgar seldom acted upon impulse ; and all the consequences of such a step rushed upon his mind, and he paused, and, after some minutes of deep thought, said :

“Could I hope to move you, Ellen, I might tell you that a revolution has taken place in my feelings, since I saw you, which has terrified me, by showing me how entirely my happiness is placed in your power, and how little hope there is for me, that this power will ever be exerted to insure it. I once, for a short time, indulged the presumptuous hope that my sentiments met with some reciprocation, though I never believed that the feeling which I was vain enough for moments, to imagine that I had excited, was more than a faint and inadequate return for the warmest and most exclusive love. For I did not put abstract notions of duty, religious dogmas, brothers, sisters, or parents, for one moment in competition with you. Judge, then, in what a

cruel situation I was placed, even in these brief and fleeting moments of happiness, when the cup was poisoned at my lips by the knowledge, that even could I win from you a requital of my love, that my father's eternal displeasure would have rested upon us; the curse of a father, the tears of a mother, would have pursued us. Yet even this I would have braved, were it not that I am a slave to the vilest of bondage—pecuniary dependence. I am almost entirely dependent on my father; and could I ask you to share beggary with me. Or else, forgetful of the claims of my country, of the call of honor, sit down tamely in a country on the eve of rebellion against my king; preserving safety only by dishonor, and eating the bread of dependence from your father's hand. Contempt must have mingled with your love, could it have been possible, Ellen, that a soul, pure and elevated as yours, could have felt such an emotion for a man placed in circumstances so degrading."

"To what purpose should we pursue so painful a theme? If no obstacle had existed to your wishes but the eternal displeasure of your parents, which you were certain of incurring, this surely would have been sufficient to prevent—"

"There are few things, Ellen, sufficient to prevent us from cherishing our brightest hopes. I could not find consolation in the cold maxims of duty, for renouncing all that my soul held most dear; and how could I reverence the objections of my parents, when I knew they were founded on motives of ambition and interest, and formed in entire ignorance of your mind and character? Every word you utter, Ellen, convinces me how little you know of my heart, and of the difference between our feelings. Can you wonder that the very consciousness of this—a consciousness which I have long felt more painfully than I can express—has often made my conduct appear strange, unkind, inconsistent? You ask me to what purpose we should pursue a theme so painful. Alas, Ellen! do you not know that there are feelings so strong, so replete with anguish, that they force themselves from the over-burthened heart? I could not have asked you such a question in a similar situation; my own heart would have answered it."

These words were uttered in tones, in which sadness and tenderness were so mingled, and Edgar's eyes were fixed with such a melancholy earnestness on Ellen, that she averted her face to conceal her emotion; and bitter tears forced themselves down her cheeks. She tried in vain to collect her thoughts, to compose her feelings, and to consider in what manner she ought to reply to Edgar; she could not confess an attachment which she believed that neither of them could innocently indulge, and when Edgar, too, had just avowed his inability to offer her his hand. And even in this hour of sadness, when she looked forward to an eternal separation, the bitterest thought of all, that filled her heart with sorrow too deep for words, was that Edgar was unworthy of her affections. If he had never determined to offer her his hand, even if she had returned his love, his conduct had been cruel, insincere, ungenerous. And then, by what motive was he withheld? Not from affection or a sense of duty to his parents, but pecuniary dependence, as he phrased it. But, in reality, this dependence, Ellen was aware, could have amounted to nothing more serious than a want of wealth; for at the period of his first forming an affection for her, Edgar must have contemplated the possibility of settling on his lands in Virginia, and this, with the portion which her father would have given her, would have insured the comforts and many of the luxuries of life. Ellen's perceptions of truth were too clear to be blinded by her wishes or her feelings, and a thousand mingled emotions of mortification and sorrow kept her silent.

Edgar saw her hastily brush away the tears that were flowing bright and fast; her face was averted, but he saw that she vainly attempted two or three times to speak, and he hastened to pursue the advantage which he imagined he had gained over a heart whose emotions were so much under his own control.

"Ellen," he said, "if indeed you love me—as hope still whispers in my heart may yet be possible—give me a talisman which may preserve me from all the dangers that will beset my path, when the sweet light of your eyes shines upon it no longer, but in memory. My father says he entertains but little hope of my elder brother's recovery. Nay, start not, Ellen, family affection

is but one of those phantoms we are taught to believe in and reverence from our cradles ; love can only spring from congenial minds or kindred hearts ; **nor** do I profess to feel this emotion for a brother with whom I **have** never had tastes, or feelings, or pursuits in common, and to whom nature has denied all power of becoming an interesting companion. Do not injure me by supposing that I am insensible to his sufferings, or wish his death ; yet, in contemplating such an event as probable, pardon me, Ellen, if that love for you, which has become a part of my existence, suggests the hope that, if you indeed return my affection, the day may not be far distant when you may yet be mine. Promise me only, to form no other engagement ; wait only until I become master of my own actions, and I swear that no obstacle shall then deter me from returning to claim you as my own—as the joy, the pride, the happiness of my life.”

A deep sigh was Ellen’s only reply, her face was still averted, and she remained silent so long, that Edgar believed she was hesitating as to giving the promise he had requested.

“Speak, dearest Ellen,” he said, “that I may have strength to meet the parting hour.”

“I feel,” said Ellen, “even now, as if your words were but sounds uttered in a frightful dream. • Oh, Edgar, how cruelly I have been deceived ! Had I not heard them from your lips, I could not have believed that you would have uttered words so cruel, so unfeeling, about a brother sinking in the grave, and could look forward to his death as a source of hope and joy. How could you know so little of my heart ? how could you think so meanly of me, as to suppose that I would promise to incur the curse of your father, the tears of your mother, which you say would eternally pursue us, merely because you had succeeded to your poor brother’s fortune ?”

Edgar was deeply mortified, and vexed with himself, that he should have made so fatal a mistake. He feared that it was irretrievable ; and, though he had never been more certain of Ellen’s love, than at this moment, yet he had never felt more strongly the hopelessness of attempting to bind him to her by vows of plighted faith.

"I will not," he said, "retort your reproaches, Ellen. Cold and cutting as they are, such words uttered by those we love, with that sort of love which makes all other sentiments fade in comparison, inflict wounds which can never be healed. To be accused by you, Ellen, of want of feeling, of meanness, of cruelty, for such do my sentiments appear to you. Sentiments formed, alas, on a sad but just estimate of life; an avowal of feelings which are natural, though certainly not the language of poetry or romance, has offended you, from its truth; and you do not hesitate, even in this hour of unspeakable bitterness, to pronounce upon me the harshest sentence. The poverty of the rich, that is, of those who have been educated in habits of affluence, and the feelings belonging to such a station, involves trials so bitter and humiliating that, selfish as you deem me, I would not be so selfish as to expose you to them for my sake; and not even to regain your good opinion, in some degree, can I be hypocrite enough to profess a strong affection for a brother, with whom I have no bond of common sympathy. We can not love men simply because they are our brothers. Ask your own reason and excellent good sense, Ellen, instead of listening to the prejudices of childhood, and ideas imbibed from romance, whether this be possible. I go, without one word of kindness, without one tranquilizing assurance, to brood, like a halcyon over the billows of passion, and the storms of emotion, which even now shake my soul, and which will make a wreck of my peace, when the ocean rolls between us; without one green spot in memory, one star of hope, to which I can turn, when I shall be given up as a prey to the torments of fancy and withering recollections. It would be vain to say, I can never love another, Ellen, you can not doubt my sincerity, at least in this; and if, indeed, there still lingers in your heart any emotion of tenderness for me, would it be too much to ask a promise that you will not marry another for two years, at least. I ask no longer delay?"

"If my words have given you pain to hear, it has, at least, cost me equal pain to utter them. From the first moment of our acquaintance, I have sought to spare your feelings, at whatever expense to my own, and at the last"—and at these words Ellen's

voice faltered—"surely, I could not be forgetful of what I have so long considered. No, Edgar, it was for your own sake alone that I endeavored to show you how hideous were the thoughts and feelings which you disguised under specious forms in your own heart. As to myself, it would cost me nothing to make the promise you ask, for I am sure that I shall never marry any one; but yet I will not give any pledge, any promise, because I would not have you suppose that any thing like plighted faith exists between us. I would not have your freedom of action or feeling restrained. You can not foresee what changes may take place in your heart; and if you can meet with a woman, who is capable of exercising a softening yet elevating effect upon your character, who can assist in drawing your mind to higher things, and raising your views beyond this world, all who have a real affection for you would think it desirable you should marry."

"This, Ellen, is putting the finishing stroke to your unkindness. Should I meet with such a woman, would you desire that I should marry her?"

A burning blush crimsoned Ellen's cheek, and she paused for a moment, as if examining her own heart, for the possibility of evasion scarcely ever crossed Ellen's thoughts, ere she replied, with some hesitation:

"Yes—I should wish whatever I believe to be for your welfare."

"Ellen, I believe all that is pure, lovely, and excellent, which the visions of fancy paint, but which I once believed was never indeed embodied in mortal form, dwells in you. But for you, I should never have believed in pure, self-devoted, disinterested virtue. You alone could exert such an influence as you describe on my character. I have met with but one woman who could; and if you, indeed, wish my welfare, you will not deny me some hope, however distant, accompanied with conditions, however hard, that our destinies may one day be united."

"Your present feelings mislead you. You deceive yourself in supposing that your happiness would be promoted by such an union, and I find relief in the strength of this conviction. The path of duty lies open too plainly before me to admit of mistake,

yet, if aught could have had power to make me falter in my course, it would have been the thought that I might have possessed an influence over your destiny, not only to promote the uncertain and fleeting happiness of this mortal life, but to lead you to seek the attainment of that which is pure, immortal, imperishable."

"Has this motive then lost all power over you, Ellen? Can you look on coldly and deliberately at the wreck of my temporal and eternal happiness, when you might save me by stretching forth your hand? and satisfy yourself by thinking that your own, at least, are safe, while you pursue unmoved what you call the path of duty? How can I do otherwise than abhor these cold and calculating principles, which you call duty, when I see their power over a heart naturally so warm, so generous, so disinterested as your own? I only ask you, Ellen, to follow the dictates of your own pure nature—to obey the impulses of a heart filled with all that is noble, lovely, and disinterested."

"How little do you know, Edgar, of human nature, though I have often heard you say it had been the study of your life! How little do you know of the fearful conflicts of emotion, the evil feelings that contend for mastery in the heart of every mortal being, if you suppose the impulses of any heart are all pure and noble! I thank God, that the delusion, which at times had such power over me, is past, and I am so well assured that we never can be to each other more than we have been. Indeed, Edgar, never more can we be even as we have been. That I speak to you freely as I would at my dying hour, when all earthly feelings fade and are lost in the clear, solemn light of truth. Recall the few last months—I say this not to reproach but to convince you—has not our intercourse been restrained, painful, and marked often by coldness, and an even studied disregard of my feelings, on your part? From whatever motive your conduct proceeded, the same causes still exist; the same difference in our principles and characters would give rise to the same distrust and dissatisfaction on yours; feelings of ambition, of worldly-mindedness, which have lain dormant in your bosom, from circumstances and want of incitements to arouse them, would revive, and you might,

when it was too late, find not only, that I had failed to contribute to your happiness, but that I was an obstacle, which could not be removed, to the advancement of your interests, to the increase of your greatness, which might have been secured by a more advantageous and splendid alliance."

"I can scarcely wonder at the coldness, the unkindness, with which you have treated me, Ellen, even when I was pouring forth to you all the sadness, all the tenderness of my heart, since I perceive how very low I have sunk in your estimation; if, indeed, I have not deceived myself in supposing that you did not always deem me so unworthy. You are right to refuse the slightest assurance, the least pledge of your affection, to one whom you think so unfeeling, so low-minded."

Ellen's eyes filled with tears as she replied: "You may, perhaps, one day thank me for my firmness. I have been lately searching the depths of my own heart, and I have shrunk from my discoveries with shuddering, and bitter self-reproach. Do not, then, think me unkind, Edgar, in wishing to perform for you the same painful but salutary office, in showing the weakness and evil feelings, which, perhaps, lurk undetected within. There is but one Fountain, whose pure and living waters can wash away the sins that dwell in our hearts, under such winning disguises that we mistake them for virtues. You believe, Edgar, neither in its existence, or its efficacy; how can I hope, then, they will ever be removed from your heart?"

As Ellen uttered these words, in a manner that showed such entire forgetfulness of herself in her subject, and looked up in Edgar's face with an expression so sad, so earnest, so ingenuous, he felt the very depths of his soul moved; he took Ellen's hand gently within his own, and said: "Ellen, I wish, from the very depths of my heart, at this minute, that I could embrace your creed for your sake; though I have reasons so strong to hate the dogmas, which oppose an eternal barrier between us. If a belief such as yours is necessary to my temporal and eternal welfare, your influence alone could induce me to turn my attention to a system of religion, alike repugnant to my feelings and reason. This repugnance could be overcome by no influence but

yours ; on the contrary, it would be increased ten-fold, when I thought that it was this creed which separated, and shut from me forever the light of hope."

Ellen permitted him, almost unconsciously, to retain her hand, for her mind was totally absorbed, and her very frame trembled with the depth of her emotion. "Do not let us deceive ourselves," she said, "with sophistry ; you may shake my soul, you can not convince me. I know too well how unceasingly, how vainly, I sought to exert over your mind whatever degree of influence I possessed, to lead you to a belief in those truths which are the only anchor of the soul in the storms of life, the only star of hope which can shed a light over the dark regions of futurity. It is cruel, it is useless, to attempt to recall this delusion. Other barriers, all insuperable likewise, oppose themselves, existing in our own characters, in the disapprobation of your parents, in the impossibility of leaving a father dearer to me than myself, and whose happiness I feel to be a sacred trust, reposed in me by one who was even dearer to me than himself," and tears filled Ellen's eyes, as the image of her mother rose to her recollection.

"I see, Ellen, too plainly, there is nothing for me to hope, there is no place for me in a heart so divided ; yet deem me not selfish, if I still make one last request. It is positively essential to enable me to support the long separation from you which I must endure. Will you promise, Ellen, that you will not marry another, at least, for the space of two years ? I would gladly give a similar pledge, if I could hope you would receive it."

Ellen's color went and came, and she was silent for a minute. Edgar thought she was deliberating as to his proposal, and he cast down his eyes, to hide the joy which he felt sparkled in their glance ; but his mistake was quickly removed, when Ellen replied : "I can by no means accept such a pledge on your part—I would not fetter your actions, I would not deceive you. I can never enter into a conditional engagement, which I have no intention of fulfilling. As it respects myself, it costs me nothing to make you such a promise, if it will in any degree tranquilize your mind ; but remember that it involves no similar obligation on your part."

"Then, even for this, I thank you from my heart, Ellen; you know not the load it has removed from my breast. Before the expiration of this time, you will see me at whatever hazard, and perhaps you may see me a changed man, one less unworthy to win the love of Ellen Clifford."

"Remember," said Ellen, "I do not consider your words as binding; I accept no promise."

"At least, you can not forbid me to see you once more; you can not dissolve the ties of friendship, of gratitude, which bind me to your father and his family; you would not deprive me of all future intercourse with—"

"No," said Ellen, "you misunderstand me; but I would not have you expose yourself to hazard, on a long and perilous voyage, in such times as these, on a false belief—"

"Leave this to me, Ellen. I fear nothing now on earth, so much as losing you, and forever."

Ellen was relieved by hearing her father's footstep in the passage leading to the library, for she felt unable longer to sustain this conversation; and hastily withdrawing her hand from Edgar, she retreated through a door which opened into the garden, to endeavor to recover at least some appearance of composure before she met Mr. Clifford.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A brother, noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms
That he suspects none.

King Lear.

MR. CLIFFORD heard from Edgar the summons he had received from his father, without surprise, though not without emotion. He had expected that as soon as Lord Fitz-Clare was acquainted with the revolt of the colonies, and of the side which his son and himself had embraced in the contest, he would consider Virginia no longer a country for Edgar to reside in. In the packet which Edgar received, there was also a brief epistle addressed to Mr. Clifford. Notwithstanding the kind and unsuspecting nature of Richard Clifford, and the warm affection he cherished for his brother, unchilled by time, absence, coldness, or neglect, he could not help feeling, as he read, that there was something heartless in Lord Fitz-Clare's letter, though he did not allow himself, even in his secret soul, to give to his brother's sentiments such a name. The letter contained a lamentation, conveying, however, more of reproof than regret, as to the infatuated course, to which he feared the political sentiments of himself and his son would lead, and the ruin in which he expected they would consequently be involved. He expressed in a few lines, which Richard Clifford thought much more forcible than kind, his sense of the folly of rebellion in the colonies, placing it solely on the ground of policy; and condemned the political principles by which the Whigs were actuated, not only as chimerical, but as destructive of all government, and totally inconsistent with the allegiance due to their king and country. He thanked him, in polite but chilling terms, for the kindness and hospitality which Edgar had received be-

neath his roof, and for his exertions to assist him in laying out and cultivating his land ; but entreated that he would expedite his departure from Virginia as much as possible, as he must be aware that a longer residence in a colony in a state of rebellion, among relatives attached to the rebel cause, might well cast a shade of suspicion over Edgar's own principles and character, and was, in every point of view, unfit for him. He then dilated somewhat on the views he entertained for Edgar's future advancement ; he spoke of the splendid alliance it had long been the first wish of his heart for Edgar to contract, and that he doubted not this wish would be fulfilled on his return to England, as the lady refused all matrimonial offers, and was believed by all her friends to be passionately in love with his son ; and she had so many attractions, that he doubted not Edgar would be won by her partiality, particularly as it had been thought he had a penchant for her, before his departure to America. This plan, and these hopes, however, he desired Mr. Clifford not to mention to Edgar, as there was something in the nature of all men, particularly of young men, which revolted at the idea of being made the subject of schemes or plans of any kind. The letter concluded with remembrances to Mr. Clifford's family.

After giving the letter a careful perusal, Mr. Clifford commenced it again, to see if, upon a second reading, he could extract any sweetness, from the bitter with which it abounded. Edgar watched attentively the expression of Mr. Clifford's face, and guessed truly from it the nature of Lord Fitz-Claire's epistle. He felt mortified and ashamed, for he was sure a letter from his father must be cold indeed, when it elicited no appearance of pleasure in Mr. Clifford's countenance, which was almost as truth-telling as his daughter Ellen's, and when it gave rise to no affectionate expression. Edgar was aware that such a letter was a poor return for the truly paternal kindness which his uncle had lavished on him. He was also conscious that it was not his father's policy to deal with openness, and felt a great desire to know if he had unfolded to Mr. Clifford, any thing respecting his plans for inducing him to offer his hand to Lady Julia—a scheme, which he knew his father too well to believe that he

had relinquished, though the letter addressed to himself, contained not the most distant allusion to any such subject. Those who do not believe in providence, generally have the strongest faith in fate, in presentiments, in omens, for there is an instinct of the soul, which draws us too powerfully toward the invisible world, to admit of resistance; and Edgar, though possessing unusual tenacity of purpose, and though firmly resolved never to unite himself with Lady Julia, felt sometimes, nevertheless, as if this were to be his destiny. There is something in this sort of feeling—for it must rather be called a feeling than a belief—of a blind and overruling destiny, which exercises a power over the wills of those subjected to its influence, closely allied to that species of fascination, which the eye of a serpent, is said to possess over a bird upon which it is fixed: the victim is unable to withdraw its glance, until it becomes a victim to the foe it dreads.

Edgar Clifford knew his uncle's openness of nature so well, that he was aware a question carelessly and suddenly put, would be apt to produce an off-hand reply, as motives of caution and prudence were never the first suggestions of his mind; he therefore said, with an ingenuous air: "Does my father say any thing, sir, of his future plans with regard to me. I know his head is always fertile in schemes?"

Mr. Clifford's first impulse, was to hand him Lord Fitz-Clare's letter, but a second thought checked him, and he drew back his half extended hand, as he replied: "I see no use myself in mysteries of any kind between parents and children, but as my brother intimates that his letter was intended solely for my perusal, I do not consider myself at liberty to communicate its contents; you are probably, however, not unacquainted with the sentiments it expresses, as you have received a letter from him yourself of the same date."

Edgar felt his color change, at this confirmation of his suspicions, as he said, "I fear the tenor of my father's letter is not at all such as is due to you, my dear uncle, for the kindness you have shown me, of which I entertain a sense that words can but inadequately express; but I hope your indulgence and generosity

will dispose you to make allowance for sentiments expressed under the influence of regret and apprehension for what he fears may be the consequences of your political errors, as he deems them."

The bright and benign smile, which played on Richard Clifford's lips, and beamed in his eyes, assured Edgar more fully than a thousand protestations could have done, that nothing like resentment harbored in his uncle's bosom; and as he involuntarily contrasted the warm, guileless, and generous nature of Richard Clifford, with the cold, calculating policy, the powers of dissimulation possessed by Lord Fitz-Claire, he involuntarily sighed.

"Whatever kindness it has been in my power to show you, calls for no thanks on your part, my dear nephew, as I could not render you a service, nor afford you a pleasure, without receiving a degree of gratification myself, which would more than compensate my exertions; so you need waste no more thoughts on this subject. I will acknowledge to you, that this is the only letter I have ever received from your father without pleasure, yet you must not suppose that it has awakened even the slightest emotion of displeasure or unkindness. My heart is bound to him by early ties, strong as life itself, for I can not recollect the time when my affection for him did not appear to make a part of myself. It is unnecessary, therefore, to urge me to make allowances, which I am sufficiently disposed to do. I can understand, how differently the same objects look, viewed through different mediums; and I could not expect, that even an unprejudiced man residing in England, and totally unacquainted with our state of society, our manner of thinking and feeling, should enter into our colonial grievances, as the inhabitants of the country do. I was not therefore surprised, that my brother, should regard the sentiments and the course of the Whigs with strong disapprobation; but I confess myself hurt at the manner in which he expresses his opinion, at the terms of almost contemptuous reprobation he uses. My feelings are naturally too hasty, I am apt to yield too much to first impressions, and I dare say I attached too much importance to the expression of irritation in my brother's letter,

which might have subsided, when it was beyond his power to recall what he had written. We should never suffer words of unkindness to cross an ocean ; like poisoned arrows they may make incurable wounds, for we have no opportunity of removing the painful impressions they may have made. You must not think, however, that your father's letter has made any such impression on me, for I can well believe that it was an effusion caused by temporary feeling."

"I would that my father possessed more of your indulgence and spirit of toleration, my dear sir," said Edgar. "It would have been happier and better for us all."

"I have been forced to learn many a hard lesson in the school of life. A man who has to carve his own way to fortune, placed too, in a situation where the artificial distinctions of society are in a great measure overthrown, where talent, merit and industry find their proper level, must be narrow-minded and dull indeed, if he does not learn to divest himself of many of the prejudices of education and rank, and become accustomed from free discussion of opinion, to make allowances for the diversity of views, which will naturally arise among men from differences of situation. Had I, like my brother, been surrounded with all the pomp and circumstance of life, with the means of indulging naturally elegant tastes such as his, and preserving the exclusive fastidiousness of aristocratic habits ; surrounded, too, by all the most brilliant and distinguished society in England, entertaining views and feelings similar to my own, I should probably have regarded the contest between the colonies and our mother country as he does. A wild man of the woods and a polished peer of the realm, would naturally view the same objects from such different positions, that their appearance would differ almost entirely ; yet I honor and love the truth too much to admit that its distinctions are not immutable, however, they may appear to us. It is needless, I am sure, to say how much it grieves me to part with you, yet I would have you lose no time in obeying your father's summons, he says truly that a residence among rebels, is unsuitable for a son of Lord Fitz-Clare, and might expose you to disagreeable suspicions. On you his pride, his hope, rests, and his

spirits must now greatly need to be cheered by your presence, as the situation of your elder brother must be to him a continual source of grief and apprehension. Go then, my son, and be the joy and support of his declining years," and here a slight tremor was perceptible in Mr. Clifford's voice, for he thought of his own son, as he uttered these words; "but do not forget that the claims of truth and justice are paramount to all human obligations, for they have their origin in the eternal and immutable laws of the Deity himself. Examine for yourself the rights of man, and in the course of all such investigations, endeavor to place yourself in the situation of the oppressed party. Believe me, there is as much political as moral wisdom in the divine precept, of doing unto others as we would they should do unto us. It will probably be in your power to do much good, or much evil, to your fellow-men. The responsibilities of action in such cases are fearful, and must be well weighed ere you decide on any course, in which the welfare of your fellow creatures is involved.

The tender, generous, yet lofty feeling which spoke in every tone of Richard Clifford's voice, and that was reflected so brightly from that clear blue eye, in which it was impossible to look and doubt its truth, drew Edgar's heart more closely to his uncle than it had ever been before. For a moment he thought of confessing all his love to Ellen, and stating his intention of returning at the expiration of two years, to attempt to obtain her hand; but the consequences of such a step rushed to his mind, and he stifled the impulse. The spirit of caution, so beautifully represented in Amorassan, by the spirit of the Frozen Ocean, was always at Edgar's side, to silence by its suggestions the voice of feeling. "My dear uncle," he said, in a tone of unusual emotion, "wherever I may go, and however brilliant may be the destiny that awaits me, fortune can offer nothing as a compensation for the happiness I have enjoyed beneath your paternal roof; the lapse of years can never efface from my mind the grateful and tender remembrance of the delicacy, kindness, and affection, with which I have been treated in your family. Here I have learned, but too well for my own future peace, what do-

mestic happiness can be ; and here I have seen examples of disinterested virtue, such as I had once believed to be Utopian creations. The longings of my soul have for the first time been satisfied, and notwithstanding the lures which ambition and pleasure hold out for me in the land of my birth, the first country in the world, I feel in going back to it, that I return to a desert !”

Mr. Clifford was strongly moved at Edgar’s deep and genuine expression of feeling, and he replied, with visible emotion : “ Had it been possible to retain you with me, without violating the higher and more sacred obligations, which are due from you to your parents and country, how gladly would I have cherished you as my son ; but it is weakness to indulge feelings, which duty and affection alike command us to repress ; nor would I plant a thorn in the heart of your father, even to save myself the pang of parting forever with one whom I have learned to love as my own child. But it is more of you than myself I think, in dreading the pain of separation ; for with me, the shadows of evening are lengthening fast, and I know that the sun must soon set on all the evanescent sorrows of life ; but with you life is in the morning, and hope is strong ; you have not learned from the sad though salutary experience of life, to bear disappointment and sorrow with calmness. Yet, when once the ocean rolls between us, so many objects of interest and attraction will present themselves as to dim—I will not say obliterate—the impressions which are now so vivid in your heart.”

“ How little do you know my heart, my dear uncle, if you can suppose that any thing could obliterate, or even fade the—”

“ Do not misunderstand me, Edgar, do not be hurt at what I have said. I did not mean it as a reproach. I feel assured that you will never forget us ; but I think it one of the strongest of the numberless reasons of thankfulness, we owe to Him who hath formed our frail natures, and who remembereth that we are but dust, that time should weaken impressions, which our hearts would be unable to support, did they always continue to exist with the same strength. I would not wish that the recollections of Woodbourne and its inmates, should cast a shade of

gloom over your future path ; but when those sad and tender remembrances, intimately associated with past years and absent friends, rise to your mind, remember my parting request, that you will not be biased by prejudice, nor seduced by indolence, to decide or act on those great questions, in which the rights of men—the present and future welfare of the human race—are involved, without careful and serious examination.”

“ Be assured, that a parting request from *you* can not be forgotten by *me* ; but do not grieve me by speaking of our separation as eternal. My determination is fixed as fate again to visit America, if I am living, two years from this time—perhaps sooner !”

A melancholy smile passed over Mr. Clifford’s countenance, as he said : “ How hard it is to bow the strong will of youth, to the stern law of necessity ! I remember the feelings of my youth, nor would I damp hopes, which God grant may be realized ; but it would be vain to attempt to disguise from myself, that ere this brief space has passed a heap of ashes alone may mark the place where Woodbourne once stood ; its inmates may be cast forth in the wide world, exposed to all the hardship and horrors incident to a country which is the theatre of civil war, or—”

Mr. Clifford suddenly paused, for the image of William Clifford cut off in the flower of his days, on the battle-field, presented itself so vividly to his imagination, that he felt himself unable to complete the picture. After a minute’s silence, he added with recovered firmness : “ I have not rushed rashly and unadvisedly into danger, as my brother, judging of me, from the Richard Clifford whom he once knew, seems to fear. I have counted the cost, nor do I repent the sacrifice ; but trust that God will grant me and mine strength to abide by the cause of truth and justice, though we should perish in their defense !”

There was a sad yet lofty enthusiasm in Mr. Clifford’s voice and manner, which convinced Edgar that remonstrance or argument would be unavailing to shake the strength of his resolutions, and his only reply was a sigh, which seemed breathed from the very depths of his heart.

“ But for you, my son,” said Mr. Clifford, grasping Edgar’s

hand as he spoke, "I rejoice that a brighter lot has been cast!"

Edgar returned the pressure of his uncle's hand ; and without uttering a word in reply, for he felt how utterly vain it would be to attempt to express the thousand painful, conflicting and tumultuous emotions which shook his heart, he left the room.

CHAPTER XL.

'Tis gone! 'tis gone! those eyes have seen their last!
The last impression of that heavenly form!
The last sight of those walls wherein she lives.

Farewell! farewell! all now is dark for me.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

Mr. Clifford hastily completed all necessary arrangements for Edgar to depart on the following morning. He proposed traveling two days' journey, with him, and Edgar agreed with him in thinking that the separation would be made less painful, by setting out very early in the morning, without apprising the family of his intentions and thus spare the mutual pain of leave-taking. It was well for Mr. Clifford, that he guessed not the unspeakable bitterness of the pangs which this parting would cost Ellen and Edgar Clifford; for the sorrow of those he loved, was to him far heavier to be borne than his own.

Edgar thought it vain even to attempt to seek the necessary repose to prepare him for the fatigues of the ensuing day. Could he think that Ellen was so near him, and yet, that he had seen her perhaps, for the last time, and sleep? And yet, he felt it impossible to see her again, and bid her farewell. He endeavored to quiet himself with the recollection of Ellen's assurance that she would never marry another; he could not doubt that she loved him; and when his brother's death placed his fate at his own disposal, was there not the strongest ground to hope that Ellen might yet be induced to become his? Alas! his knowledge of Ellen's character, impressed him with the sad consciousness, that even if he possessed her heart, there were still barriers almost insuperable, existing to the accomplishment of his wishes, and he endeavored in vain to silence those discouraging suggestions. He sought to quiet the overpowering emotions

which contended for mastery within his heart, by addressing a farewell letter to Ellen, renewing his protestations of eternal constancy, and entreating her to remember the promise she had given him. He made the most forcible and eloquent appeal to her feelings, and inclosed within the letter, the cross he had before requested her to wear for his sake, and requested her to keep it until they met again.

Though Ellen was not aware of the arrangement her father and Edgar had made for their early departure, a sad foreboding that she had seen Edgar for the last time, oppressed her mind. Their conversation in the library, too, had furnished her with so many subjects for bitter and perplexing thought, that she was lost in bewildering grief. Deep and bitter were the pangs of mortification she experienced, at the new lights which had this evening been thrown on Edgar's character, and she would gladly have forgotten what had past, or have given a favorable interpretation to his feelings, had it been possible. But alas! the truth was too strong and clear to be mistaken by a heart pure and single as Ellen Clifford's. For, however we may boast of reason as an instrument for discovering truth, for the knowledge of moral truth we are much oftener indebted to the dictates of the heart, than to those of reason. Ellen could not think, without a shudder, of the manner in which Edgar appeared to regard the probable death of his brother; it was too plain that he looked forward to it as an event necessary for his happiness, however he might attempt to disguise his feelings even to himself, nor could she avoid feeling that his conduct toward herself, had been in the highest degree ungenerous, and unkind. For this, she felt not the slightest shadow of resentment, but a withering of the heart, at the consciousness of the deep, the true, the pure affection, which she had bestowed, in return for so mixed, so selfish a sentiment. But still more for his own sake, did she grieve to find him capable of such feelings.

The gray, cold light of the earliest dawn, the most gloomy of all hours, found Edgar and Ellen both still watchers. Mr. Clifford was surprised, on tapping softly at Edgar's door, to find it opened immediately, and his nephew appeared before him, evi-

dently quite prepared for his departure. He perceived that the bed was untouched, and would have scolded Edgar for so bad a preparation for the fatigues of the day, but the words seemed to stick in his throat, and after two or three times clearing his throat, his speech ended in a simple "Good-morning." Edgar replied, only by pressing his hand, and led the way himself out of the apartment without once trusting himself to look back. Though they passed the door of Ellen's apartment with almost noiseless steps, yet even this slight sound was perceived by her watchful ear, for her fears had wrought up her nerves to a pitch of excitement, which rendered them susceptible of the slightest impression. Her heart almost stopped as she drew the curtains aside, and saw her worst fears confirmed, as she saw the servant fastening Edgar's trunk to Mr. Clifford's carriage, which was to carry them to the nearest place where it was possible to procure any further means of conveyance. It was the work of a moment to throw on a morning dress, and rush down. A thousand things crowded in her mind, which it was indispensable she should say to Edgar. She must at least soften the speeches that now appeared harsh, and unfeeling, which she had uttered the evening before; she must remove, too, false impressions if they existed, as to her considering his faith pledged to her. And yet, when she had reached the foot of the stairs, she felt how utterly impossible any explanation would be at such a time as this, and how vain even to attempt the utterance of a syllable.

When Ellen had had a moment's time to recollect herself, she acted immediately according to the dictates of her nature, and determined not to gratify her own feelings at the expense of Edgar's. He had sought to avoid the pain of saying farewell, and her own feelings told her it would be wisest and kindest to permit him to do so. With trembling steps she retreated to the library, and took her station at the window, in such a position, as she fancied would screen her from observation. She watched Edgar and Mr. Clifford come from the house with slow and reluctant steps. Edgar paused, and looked up at Ellen's window; no form was visible; his eyes now instinctively sought the library window, the scene of his parting conversation with Ellen,

and he started and stood as if transfixed to the spot ; for Ellen herself stood there, pale and motionless as a statue, but with an expression of countenance, which he felt, that time could never efface, for it seemed to enter his very soul. Her dark hair, simply parted from her forehead, fell in neglected and rich profusion over her white morning dress, and her whole appearance was at once so striking, and so touching, that Edgar felt drawn by an almost irresistible impulse to return, and, renouncing father, country, and all the dreams of ambition for ever, remain with Ellen, and living only in the present, trust his fate recklessly to the course of events.

Mr. Clifford saw that a painful conflict was passing in Edgar's mind ; though he suspected not of what nature, nor did he guess the depth of the anguish which pierced his soul. He gently took his arm and almost led him toward the carriage, and Edgar felt as he looked back, for the last time, at the library window, and caught the last glimpse of Ellen's white dress, when her features were no longer discernible,

" That his sun was dim,
And the night cometh ne'er to part from him."

CHAPTER XLI.

The words he uttered shall not pass away ;
For they sank into me—the bounteous gift
Of one whom time and nature had made wise ;

Of one in whom persuasion and belief
Had ripened into faith, and faith become
A passionate intuition ; whence the Soul,
Though bound to Earth by ties of piety and love,
From all injurious servitude is free.

WORDSWORTH.

WE sometimes find, in the experience of life, that characters most dissimilar to our own possess at once a strange sort of attractive as well as repulsive force. Lord Fitz-Claire was himself surprised at the interest he felt in Mr. Morton's society ; and Mr. Morton, though he perceived all the heartlessness and worldly-mindedness of Lord Fitz-Claire's character, possessed that Christian charity, whose rarest and most lovely attribute is to hope all things. He was always ready to seize on every opportunity of doing good, and had often succeeded in cases, where those in whose hearts the light of divine love was less bright, the fire of zeal less ardent, would have despaired. It appeared, perhaps, more extraordinary to Mr. Morton than to any one else, that his society should possess any peculiar power of attraction for Lord Fitz-Claire ; but as it was evident that it did so, it awakened the hope, that he might be the means of exciting in his heart, emotions of a religious nature ; or, at least, of turning his attention toward the subject of Christianity, though he was fully aware that the undertaking was attended with great difficulties. As his habits of intercourse with Lord Fitz-Claire became more confirmed, this hope waxed fainter ; but the death of one hope in Mr. Morton's heart was like that of the Phoenix—another younger and brighter arose from its ashes ; and as his hope and interest

declined for Lord Fitz-Clare, they became strongly awakened for Lord Francis. There was something in the sad, yet gentle expression of his countenance, and the touching languor of **indisposition** apparent in every look and movement, which is so **affecting**, when we believe it to be the seal of death stamped on the brow of youth. No elasticity of youthful spirits, no buoyancy of hope was perceptible. The light of his mild eye seemed quenched, and the bright current of joy or hope never mantled in his pale cheek, which was flushed only by one bright pink spot, marking too plainly that an insidious foe had lodged itself within.

The sight of suffering, or sorrow of any kind, even in its most repulsive and disgusting forms, possessed power to call forth sympathy from Mr. Morton's heart; but there was something about this young man which affected and touched him deeply, and produced that sort of sympathizing compassion, which chains our thoughts to the objects that excite it, and places us under a necessity of doing something to remove the suffering, the recollection of which has thus fastened itself on our hearts. The painful sense which Francis entertained of his own deficiencies, had produced a sort of shrinking reserve, which had become so much stronger from the failure of his health, that he avoided all intercourse with society, and shunned the face of a stranger, as he would have avoided pestilence. Lord Fitz-Clare had long since given up the improvement of his elder son as hopeless, and thought it now entirely useless to attempt to change his course. He thought he had fulfilled all his parental duties in procuring for him the best medical advice. His mind had no sympathy or communion with that of his son, and he possessed no balm for a wounded spirit. The pleasures of the world had no allurements for a frame suffering not only under the languor of disease, but the depression of constitutional melancholy, increased too, by the circumstances in which Francis was placed. The charms of a domestic circle, warmed by the love of kindred, animated by the intelligence of congenial minds, which would have been so delightful to a temper naturally mild, and yearning for sympathy and affection, existed not for him; and his literary tastes, which, though they never were cultivated nor directed, were yet **partial-**

ly developed, had lost their power of affording gratification ; for he felt that his days were fleeting like a shadow, and subjects which derived their interest from a world which was so fast passing away from him, could no longer arrest his attention.

He had never read but for pleasure ; the desire of knowledge for its own sake, or for the love of fame, or for the means of realizing ambitious aspirations, had never stimulated him, for he had been early impressed with an undue sense of his own deficiencies, and his mind and disposition were precisely of that character which are crushed by discouragement. He did not possess that stubborn something—I know not if we should call it pride, but rather a power of resistance—which rises in proportion as it is trampled upon, and which has often enabled those who have possessed no rare intellectual gifts, and who have had to encounter the frowns of fortune, to win and maintain high places ; nor was he endowed with that sort of mind, which, rich in the abundance of its own resources, creates for itself a world of its own, without depending on the applause or sympathy of others.

When Mr. Morton paid his first visit to Lord Fitz-Claire, Francis found himself compelled to enter into conversation with him, as his father was called out of the room for a few minutes on business ; and he was drawn into conversing with an interest to which he had long been a stranger, by the kind and natural tone and manner with which Mr. Morton at once disarmed reserve, and the good sense and good feeling, likewise, which his remarks evinced ; so different in character from those which Francis had been accustomed to hear. He heard, with regret, Lord Fitz-Claire's returning footsteps, and though he continued to listen, with apparent interest and pleasure, to Mr. Morton's conversation, he himself preserved as entire silence, as courtesy would permit. Mr. Morton occasionally addressed a remark to Francis, seemed to listen with interest to his replies, and turned his eyes toward him from time to time, as if to intimate that his conversation was addressed equally to himself and Lord Fitz-Claire. To excite peculiar interest in any one, particularly in a stranger, and a man of rich and varied intellect, such as Mr. Morton undoubtedly possessed, was a new and delightful sensation to Francis,

and excited him so strongly, as to make him gradually forget the habitual restraint of his father's presence; and he was scarcely less astonished than Lord Fitz-Clare, at his own interest and animation. The inspiration fled with Mr. Morton's presence, but not the recollection of the agreeable sensations he had experienced; and after some misgivings and doubts, as to whether he had not after all deceived himself, in supposing he had excited any peculiar sentiments of interest and kindness in Mr. Morton's heart, he determined to call on him.

Mr. Morton's reception was such as to remove all doubts of this kind from his mind, and Francis felt every day that his society possessed increasing attraction for him. Mr. Morton lost no opportunity of evincing toward his young friend, not only an affectionate interest, but that sort of consideration and respect, which he thought calculated to inspire him with some degree of respect for his own powers; but his efforts were chiefly directed to preparing his mind to receive the grand and consoling truths of Christianity, which he knew could alone heal the wounded spirit, and support an immortal soul when called to launch into an unknown world. The mind of Francis had never been turned toward the subject of revealed religion. Though Lord Fitz-Clare was not in the habit of descanting on his infidel opinions, yet the total contempt with which he treated Christianity, and the incidental remarks which he sometimes made in his domestic circle, perhaps, more effectually prevented his children from considering the subject as worthy of serious consideration and examination, than the most ingenious and elaborate attacks against its truth could have done. Lady Fitz-Clare's example was scarcely better calculated to inspire the minds of her children with interest or respect for religion, than her lord's; her faith was displayed only in childish and superstitious observances; her conduct exhibited nothing of the beauty, strength and consistency of a character formed on religious principles, and she appeared never to have bestowed a moment's reflection upon the reasonableness of her own faith, but received her articles of belief, implicitly from her priest. Lord Fitz-Clare himself would as soon have thought of searching the Scriptures for the investigation of truth as she

would. The attention of Francis, from the circumstances of his education, had never been directed toward the Christian faith, though he felt daily more strongly, the necessity of its sustaining and consoling influences. The wants and weakness of his nature became continually more apparent, though he knew not where to seek a remedy for them.

As Mr. Morton gradually unfolded his views, and enforced them with simplicity and feeling, a chord was touched in Francis's heart, which had never before vibrated. Could those things of which he spoke, so full of hope, of sublimity, of beauty, so exactly corresponding to the necessities of our nature, that they seemed to afford the only solution to many of its mysteries, be indeed true? He almost feared to indulge such a belief, lest he should find it melt away, like an airy fabric, at the stern touch of reason; for how unspeakably bitter would be the fading of so bright a dream! The pride of human reason, ambitious hopes, which elate, worldly interests that fetter the heart, found no place in the breast of Francis. The good seed fell in a soil, unchoked with weeds, and soon sprang up. Francis wished to believe the words of divine truth, and he listened with the deepest interest to Mr. Morton, as he endeavored to show him, in the simplest and clearest manner, that the doctrines of Christianity, so far from being repugnant to reason, were really conformable to it, as far as the light of reason could extend; though he did not deny some of its truths to be above, though not contrary to this light.

A new world was now opened to the view of Francis, and he now began to discern the value of an existence, which was destined to be immortal, and to which he had hitherto only clung from the natural love of life. In the renovation of his mind and heart, he seemed to forget the languor and sufferings of his mortal frame, and Mr. Morton was himself surprised at the rapid development of his spiritual nature; with unspeakable gratitude and delight he watched the invigorating and consoling effect of divine truth on the character of his young friend. Mr. Morton felt his heart daily drawn more closely toward him, and Francis returned his affection with the warmth of a heart, naturally too gentle, too prone to lean on others for counsel and sympathy, but whose

affections had been early crushed by neglect, and feelings withered by coldness.

He had never known even a mother's fondness, for though Lady Fitz-Clare was by no means destitute of all natural affection toward him, she showed such evident marks of preference for her other children, especially for Edgar, above himself, that he was always depressed and mortified by a painful consciousness of his own inferiority. Unfortunately for Francis, he possessed neither the personal beauty, graceful manners, nor vivacity of disposition necessary to please his mother, nor the intellectual endowments and strength of character, which could alone insure the approbation of his father; and his deficiency in all these requisites for their favor, became more painfully apparent from the contrast with Edgar's rare endowments. Notwithstanding the marked and invidious preference of his parents, had Edgar borne his superiority meekly, Francis could not only have forgiven it, but have loved him as a brother, and even have felt a pride in the very talents and accomplishments which so entirely eclipsed his own. But he soon perceived with deep mortification the very low estimation in which Edgar held his powers of mind, nor was this consciousness alleviated by the affection and sympathy which often exists in the strongest degree between those who possess extremely unequal intellectual endowments.

Francis ceased to indulge the vain hope that his brother would ever consider him as a friend or equal; their pursuits and feelings became daily more dissimilar, and though inmates of the same roof, and children of the same parents, they became strangers in heart. The painful sense of inferiority made Francis shrink from society, because he felt as if any attention he met with, was paid to him only as eldest son of Lord Fitz-Clare, and he deemed this a most unfortunate circumstance, as he thought whatever rendered him conspicuous was only making his deficiencies more apparent.

The divine truths on which Mr. Morton dwelt, were like balm to the wounded spirit of Francis; and, in his heart in which earthly hope seemed to have died, a bright and immortal hope sprung up, when he began to regard this transient, and to him suffering and almost worthless existence, as but the commence-

ment of a glorious eternity. His humiliations and mortifications seemed to fade in his contemplation, as he became more and more enabled to look beyond the petty trials of life. The cold neglect of his father, the comparative indifference of his mother, no longer entered like iron into his soul, for he no longer felt himself an alien in the universe. He could gaze at the glories of the heavens, at the rich and varied beauties of the earth; he could listen to the sweet songs of birds, and inhale the perfume, and admire the exquisite and evanescent beauty of flowers, the fairest and loveliest of Nature's works, and his heart would swell in his bosom with a sense of grateful exultation, as he thought, "My Father made them all." He learned likewise from the divine source of Revelation, that he, too, must be answerable for the talents with which God had intrusted him, and a sense of religious duty and responsibility stimulated all the dormant energies of his mind.

Mr. Morton was now the constant adviser, friend, and counselor of Francis; and the latter looked forward to the time of their separation, as the heaviest earthly misfortune that could befall him. Lord Fitz-Clare observed with surprise the intimacy which appeared to have sprung up between Mr. Morton and his son. He had deemed Francis to be devoid of that strength of feeling which is necessary to forming an ardent friendship, and destitute likewise of the discernment necessary to appreciate the powers of Mr. Morton's mind and charms of conversation, and it would have seemed equally improbable, that Mr. Morton could feel any interest in the society of Francis. This, however, he ascribed to compassion, and the love of proselytism, with which he began to suspect Mr. Morton to be infected. He deemed, too, the religious creed of Francis of so little importance, that it was just as well he should adopt any system of opinions, which could contribute most to his own gratification.

CHAPTER XLII.

What deep wound ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest.

BYRON.

It would be vain to attempt to describe the emotions, or, rather, the cessation of emotion, the icy feeling which froze Ellen's heart, as the last glimpse of the carriage passed from her eyes. It was impossible to realize that she had parted with Edgar forever, and yet her reason assured her that this was indeed the case. What a crowd of ideas and thoughts rushed upon her mind, with such painful vividness and rapidity, that they seemed to crowd the existence of the past year into a few brief moments; and fearful, indeed, was the conflict of feeling to which these remembrances gave rise. The mysterious scroll of the future, too, unfolded itself in burning characters of light, and within it, she read Edgar's doom written. In vain she pressed her hand over her eyes as if to shut out thoughts, that assumed the brightness and distinctness of visions, and she remained rooted to the spot, scarcely conscious where she was, until she was roused from this state by her maid. The girl said, she had come to see if any thing was the matter, that the breakfast bell had rung long ago, and even Mr. Walton, after waiting patiently a long time, had inquired if Miss Ellen was sick.

Ellen obeyed the summons mechanically, and seated herself at the breakfast table. Notwithstanding Mr. Walton's habitual inattention to the persons and things around him, even his attention was arrested by Ellen's appearance and manner, and he said in a tone and manner of unusual kindness, and as if suddenly inspired by a bright thought:

"You do not seem well this morning, and solitude is not suitable for you. Had you not better send for Mrs. Herbert? And in the mean time amuse yourself with a translation of some of

the lighter classics—such as Pope's Homer, or Dryden's Virgil, which, though by no means faithful translations, may serve the purpose of amusement."

Ellen was never insensible to the voice of kindness, and though she scarcely collected the import of the words he addressed to her, she thanked him for his kindness, and assured him that she should soon feel better, and that she should not be lonely.

Mr. Walton, after lingering about the breakfast-table some time, contrary to his usual custom, and attempting to amuse Ellen with a discussion—for it could scarcely be called a conversation—on such literary subjects as he thought best suited to amuse her, left her, with an invitation to come and read with him in the library, if she should want company or amusement.

As he closed the door and left her, Ellen was almost tempted to beg him to stay, for she felt an oppressing sense of sadness and loneliness that amounted almost to suffocation. The empty rooms, the very echo of her footsteps, sent a chill to her heart; and moved by that natural and involuntary impulse, which leads us to seek relief in change and motion, as if we could thus escape ideas and feelings we bear within, Ellen went into the garden. Again she heard the sweet singing of the birds—again her eyes rested on the flowers, that Edgar and herself had heard and seen for the last time together, but a few hours ago; and though it was a bright and balmy sunny morning, in which all nature seemed rejoicing, to Ellen's eye, every object wore the loneliness and sadness of death itself. All around seemed to speak of death, of change, of eternal separation: and to her excited imagination the past again became the present, the forms of her mother, her brother, and Edgar, stood in all the vividness of reality before her. Yet she felt as if between her and them a great and impassable gulf was placed. Yet it was something to think that her mother was placed beyond the reach of sorrow; and William she thought of, with full and immovable confidence that he would never falter from the path of duty, and that God would sustain a heart so noble and so true, under every trial. But with every thought of Edgar, was mingled inexpressible bitterness and sadness. Even the consciousness that she possessed his affec-

tions, afforded her no satisfaction, for she could not conceal from herself, that even his love toward her, had been so selfish and ungenerous, and so alloyed with worldly and ambitious feelings, that they had exercised a more powerful influence on his conduct toward her, than regard for her happiness.

Yet at this moment it was not of her own happiness that Ellen thought, nor was it those errors of thought and feeling, into which she had been gradually led by her attachment to Edgar, and which had hitherto occasioned her such profound regret, that now grieved her. No, as these unwelcome recollections and convictions forced themselves upon her mind, she thought only of Edgar himself; and it wrung her heart, to yield to the decree of her reason, and to divest him of all those attributes of nobleness, generosity, sensibility and disinterestedness, with which her imagination had once delighted to adorn him.

Hour after hour passed away in this overpowering train of thought and feeling, and Ellen still strolled about in the garden, or stood immovable and unconscious of the lapse of time. A new impulse was given to her feelings by the approach of her maid, who presented her with two letters saying, she had found them on the dressing table in Mr. Edgar Clifford's room. One of them was an open note addressed to Sophia, the other a sealed letter addressed to herself. Ellen looked for some minutes on the superscription, before she found courage to open it, for it seemed to her like a token from the dead; so strong was her conviction, that she should behold him no more. But when she read words addressed to herself, perhaps for the last time, so full of love, of eloquence, of grief, tears for the first time, flowed fast and unheeded down her cheeks. Her first impressions on reading this letter were tenderness and grief, and gratification at the expressions of strong affection, which seemed to flow from the heart; but a second and third perusal again awakened ideas, that had produced in her mind the distressing conviction, that Edgar did not possess the lofty and generous character, which she had once fondly dreamed was his.

"He will return no more, we have parted forever," thought Ellen, "and it is best it should be so," and her strongest conso-

lation at this moment, was the conviction, that she could not have made Edgar happy, even if the obstacles which duty and the disapprobation of her parents interposed, could have been surmounted. As these thoughts passed rapidly through her mind, she pressed the cross which Edgar's letter had contained, gently and almost unconsciously to her lips, then with trembling and hurried hand, fastened the ribbon to which it was attached around her neck, and hastily concealed it in the folds of her dress.

It was not until evening, that Ellen recollected Sophia had not been apprised of Edgar's sudden departure, and inclosing his farewell note in an envelope, she wrote a line to say, that Edgar and her father had set out very early in the morning; and to beg, that Sophia would by no means think of returning to Woodbourne, from any fear that she should be lonely, as she would prefer greatly her remaining to render any little offices of assistance and consolation to Olivia she might require.

Sophia was greatly concerned at the intelligence of Edgar's departure; tears fell bright and fast as a summer shower on his farewell note; but few events had power long to obscure the sunshine of her breast, and handing the note to Olivia, who stood silent and almost breathless by her side, fearing Sophia's grief was caused by some evil tidings from her brother, said, smiling through her tears: "Edgar promises to come back in two years to visit us, and I am sure he will; as by that time, I hope and believe, this horrible war will be ended. For my part," she added with a smile, looking toward Mr. Granville, "I scarcely care whether the king or the rebels succeed, so it were but over, and papa and William were safe."

Olivia hastened to avert the angry reply, which Mr. Granville's look threatened, by talking of Edgar. She guessed but too well the state of Ellen's mind, and wondered internally at the disinterestedness and self-devotion which no circumstances could conquer, and which on this occasion evinced itself, by her affectionate consideration for her comfort, in preference to her own.

"I can not think, my dear Sophia," she said, "of taking advantage of Ellen's kindness; she must be so lonely, and every

thing looking so sad around her, after the departure of a friend under such circumstances. Mr. Walton can not be considered any more as a companion, than the old bookcases in the library ; and much as I shall feel the deprivation of your society, I should think it unpardonable selfishness to detain you longer from Ellen !”

Sophia agreed with Olivia, it was best she should return to Woodbourne ; and she rejoiced in this determination, when she met Ellen at the door ; for the paleness and sadness of her countenance, showed plainly how much she needed the presence of a friend

CHAPTER XLIII.

Dreams such as thine pass now
Like coming clouds before me. If I think
How beautiful they seem, 'tis but to feel
How soon they fade, how fast the night shuts in.
But in that World to which my hopes look on,
Time enters not, nor mutability;
Beauty and goodness are unfading there.

SOUTHEY.

Two years had passed, and how many emotions of joy, of sorrow, of grief, of fear, had passed away with them, without, perhaps, leaving even a trace in the memory; yet not without their silent and imperceptible influences in moulding the hearts through which they had passed. For the passing emotions of the day, the winged thoughts of the hour, exert as surely their imperceptible, though not invisible influences in forming character, as the morning dew and the fleeting sunbeam develop the luxuriant foliage, the fair flower, the blushing fruit, which lies hidden within their germs. How many conjectures had become certainties, as Time revealed the fearful secrets he bears in his bosom—how many hopes had been disappointed—how many fears had proved groundless—when this brief period had passed away.

To none of the children of Adam, the “poor sons of a day,” can two years elapse, without many changes, many conflicts of feeling; but to those who are endowed with quick sensibilities, and to those who live in eventful times, two years often appear, in review, to have occupied ten times that period.

Ellen Clifford sate alone in the library, and remembered, on this very evening two years ago, she had stood with Edgar on this very spot, for the last time. She heard again the same sweet singing of birds, she inhaled the perfume of the same flow-

ers, and looked again at the fair face of nature, unaltered in its features, since she had beheld it with him : but how changed was all the world within ; that spiritual world whose restless elements of change have power to effect such rapid and mighty revolutions. Could the feelings, the thoughts, the desires of other years be suddenly restored to us, we should often be utterly unable to recognize our personal identity, and yet, though this perfect restoration can never take place, there are days and hours, in which the recollection of the past arises so vividly in the mind—may we not also say in the heart, for surely there is a memory of the heart as well as of the mind—that we seem transported to the confines of two worlds and are enabled at once to compare and view our past and present existence. These are hours peculiarly fitted for self-examination, and favorable for discoveries in that hidden world of wonders we bear within our own bosoms.

Ellen Clifford felt this to be such an hour with her, and as the events and feelings of the last two years passed in rapid review before her, they appeared rather to occupy the duration of a life, than of the brief period they had really filled. It is said to be "greatly wise to talk with our past hours;" it is also greatly sad; yet even this sadness is often salutary, and its effects invigorating. Ellen shuddered, as she recalled the feelings to which Edgar's last conversation had given rise, and a faint feeling of sickness came over her, as she remembered the deadly sorrow, with which she turned from the window where she then stood, when the last glimpse of the carriage which bore him away passed from her view. And then, the withering of hope, as she schooled her heart to the stern task of viewing the truth, and contemplating it in all its sad reality; and of destroying by its icy touch, all the bright and glowing visions which feeling and fancy busily conjured up. How often had she found it necessary to repeat internally, that Edgar and herself had parted to meet no more, and that it was best it should be so. To strengthen these convictions, she would endeavor, again and again, to renew the impressions, which their intercourse during the last few months of his residence at Woodbourne, and es-

pecially, the last conversation that had ever passed between them, had made upon her! How had her heart revolted at entertaining these apparently unkind thoughts of Edgar, while reason and duty admonished her to listen to the truths which were to regulate her future conduct and feelings! Then the sickening fears that had assailed her for Edgar's happiness, his temporal and eternal welfare! And the greatest consolation she found for these apprehensions was the belief, that even were she to devote her life to him, abandon her principles, and sacrifice her duty to follow him, she could not either make him happier or better. For she knew that the ruling passions of his mind were entirely hostile to any influence she might hope to exert; and her heart too clearly foreboded, that when removed from her presence, they would resume their sway.

She remembered too, how she had buried within her own heart all its fearful workings, all its cruel conflicts, suppressing all its yearnings for one word of sympathy, of love, of consolation. She had striven alone, and her soul had come forth purified and strengthened from the conflict; for in the deep consciousness of her own weakness, she had been led to apply more earnestly to that Fountain of Strength, to which none ever appealed in vain.

Among so many sad remembrances, there were some not without their sweetness, and among the sweetest of these, was the recollection, that even during the dreariest and saddest period of her existence, her father had never known her sufferings, her lip had worn a smile for him, and on her tongue had dwelt for him words of love, of consolation, of encouragement. The image of her brother, too, was like a bright star in her memory, and her heart swelled with thankfulness to God, and her eyes filled with tears, as she thought how the deeds of his manhood had fulfilled the promises of his youth, and how he had renounced his earthly hopes for the pure and lofty purposes of Christian patriotism.

Ellen's forebodings with regard to Edgar's fidelity to his vows of constancy to her, had been fully realized; for a few months since, the news of his marriage to Lady Julia Somerset had

reached Woodbourne. She heard this intelligence without fainting, or falling into a brain fever, according to the usage of heroines from time immemorial, on such occasions; yet she did not hear it without strong and mixed emotions. From the time of Edgar's departure from Virginia, Ellen had accustomed herself to regard his return as extremely improbable, and an union with him as utterly impossible, nor had she believed that one doubt on this subject lurked within her heart; yet, one of her first impulses after hearing of his marriage, was to untie the ribbon which fastened his cross around her neck, and seal it up in a blank envelope, and carefully lock it up, to be returned, if ever she should have an opportunity of doing so. She blushed at detecting this lingering weakness, as she performed this action.

The painful emotions which this event produced in Ellen's mind, arose greatly more from considerations that related to Edgar, than from any that regarded herself. She felt no pangs of wounded vanity, no desire of revenge, nor even disappointed hope, for she had long too well known the mixed and selfish nature of Edgar's love, to believe that he would sacrifice worldly views or ambitious aspirations for her. But Ellen had loved "not wisely, but too well," to be now entirely regardless of his happiness or welfare, which she could not believe to be secured by a match of mere convenience or policy; and that his marriage with Lady Julia was one of this kind, she entertained but little doubt, especially after hearing from her father, that Lord Fitz-Claire had so long wished this event to take place, for she had understood fully, from Edgar, the worldly-minded and ambitious character of his father.

"I always thought," said Sophia, a few days after the intelligence had reached them, and they were discussing the matter in a family circle. "I always thought," and here she cast a side glance at Ellen, "indeed, I always *knew* that Edgar would never fall in love with any but a woman of rank and fashion. One of your brilliant beauties, with showy accomplishments; and you see the event has justified my prediction, for Lady Julia is said to possess all these qualifications."

Mrs. Herbert looked directly at Ellen, for she scorned a side

glance upon any occasion, but no other change was visible in her countenance, but a slight flush passing over her cheek ; nor did she make any reply to Sophia's remark. Mrs. Herbert was satisfied by this observation, of Ellen's indifference ; yet she internally rejoiced that Edgar was married, as it precluded the possibility of any future annoyance from his addresses. Ellen had been long since reinstated in Mrs. Herbert's favor, though she had not entirely recovered the high stand she once occupied in her estimation ; for Mrs. Herbert could never entirely forget or excuse the weakness of character, and wrong feeling which she thought her attachment to Edgar Clifford had manifested. But so many virtues, if they could not atone for one fault, rendered it impossible, at least, not to forgive it ; and Mrs. Herbert felt every trace of resentment and estrangement vanish beneath the sweet and attractive influences of Ellen's gentleness, kindness, and disinterestedness. Indeed, Ellen's patience under every trial, her unremitting exertions for usefulness, enforced likewise Mrs. Herbert's respect, though she never now permitted herself to use the unqualified terms of approbation, which she had formerly bestowed upon her character.

And Ellen had learned no longer to hang with delight, on the least word of praise or approbation from those she loved, no longer to shrink from the faintest breath of censure from her friends ; for the circumstances of trial through which she had passed, had increased and strengthened the habit of her mind, of looking to God alone as the Judge of her actions, and her spirit thus invigorated had power to sustain itself, without sympathy or praise. During the dark season of despondency, which had overclouded Ellen's path, she had probed deeply the weaknesses of her own heart, and though her repentance was deep and genuine, she felt that its effect on her mind, would probably end in producing a habit of hopeless reverie, for in proportion as her thoughts and feelings were confined within her own bosom, the more restless and morbid did they become, assuming a stronger color from a disordered imagination ; and as these internal workings of the mind became more active and vivid, Ellen felt her inclination and anxiety for action and exertion diminish,

and her omissions of duty were continually furnishing fresh food for self reproach.

In reviewing this portion of her life, Ellen always thought with gratitude of Mr. Morton's arrival, as this event was one of the means of arousing her from the hopeless state of feeling, and the gloomy and perplexing train of thought into which her mind and her heart had sunk. Mr. Morton was not only deeply versed in human nature, but was likewise intimately acquainted with Ellen's peculiar disposition, and the motives by which he addressed her, and the kind tone of encouragement with which he spoke, had had power to call forth the slumbering energies of her mind, by ministering to a wounded spirit, and exciting other trains of thought, than those which had so continually preyed upon her mind.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle ;
No torch is kindled at its blaze,
A funeral pile !

BYRON.

It was the second anniversary of the same day, since Edgar had stood alone in the library at Woodbourne with Ellen Clifford for the last time ; and his mind, too, was now busily engaged in reviewing the scenes through which he had passed, and to him the retrospection was one of almost unmingled bitterness—so bitter that he would gladly have resigned all the rare intellectual powers and endowments upon which he had once so much prided himself, to have exchanged places with the dog that lay at his feet, could he thus have effaced all recollections of the past.

And yet to a superficial observer, Edgar Clifford's lot would have appeared one of almost unmixed prosperity, for nature and fortune seemed alike to have showered their choicest gifts upon him. His personal graces and accomplishments made him the idol of fashion, while his rare talents were rapidly enabling him to change the visions of ambition into realities, as his political power and consequence increased. His marriage with Lady Julia had placed a noble fortune at his disposal, and his wife was considered one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of fashion—and yet at this moment, he was ready to pronounce himself the most wretched of men, and he cursed his father's ambition, which he believed had destroyed his happiness.

When Edgar Clifford returned to England, he first felt how deep was the change that had passed over him ; his old interests had lost their power, his former pleasures their allurements, for his heart was occupied with other images, and other scenes. Surrounded by all that was imposing in rank, or brilliant in fash-

ion, in the midst of the gayest assemblies of the first city of the world, his fancy would often transport him to the calm shades of Woodbourne—the fair form of Ellen Clifford would flit before him, and the tones of her voice would sound in his ears, sweet as the melodies we remember to have heard in the days of our childhood. The beauty he would once have admired for its brilliancy, now appeared to him devoid of soul and feeling, as he recalled the lovely face of Ellen Clifford, ever varying with every changing expression of intellect or sensibility; and the manners he should once have applauded for their elegance or polish, seemed cold and artificial, in comparison with the genuine warmth and softness of Ellen's manner, and the thousand simple and natural graces, which appeared to spring spontaneously from native elegance and refinement.

Yet though his heart turned thus fondly to Ellen, he perceived every day more clearly, how formidable were the obstacles that separated them; and his hopes daily grew fainter of being able to surmount them. Had it been possible, without confirming Lord Fitz-Claire's suspicions as to the state of his affections, to have avoided all mention of Woodbourne and its inmates, and of Ellen especially, to him, he would gladly have done so, for he knew that on this subject their sentiments were in such total opposition, that he should have despaired of making his father understand his feelings, even had he wished to do so. But the slightest wish of the sort had never entered his heart; pride and policy alike forbade him to expose the dearest hopes, and most cherished visions of his heart, to the contemptuous disapprobation and stern displeasure of Lord Fitz-Claire; for he knew that it was utterly hopeless to attempt either to soften his heart, or change his sentiments. He determined therefore, at least, to spare himself the useless humiliation of suing in vain; indeed, his daily mortifications were already more than his spirit could well brook, without adding this which would have been the bitterest drop in his cup.

Lord Fitz-Claire had received Edgar, upon his first arrival, with all the demonstrations of kindness and affection consistent with the degree of dignity and reserve he thought it necessary to

maintain under all circumstances. He would have despised himself, for exhibiting any striking manifestation of strong emotion, in any case, had this manifestation arisen from the genuine workings of his heart; though he would not have hesitated to counterfeit feeling, when such dissimulation was necessary to attain any of the great ends at which he aimed. He would have applauded himself as much for the skillful dissimulation of feeling, when he deemed it necessary as an evidence of the power of his mind and the strength of his will, as he would have despised himself for the weakness of an involuntary manifestation of emotion. Edgar could not help contrasting his father's reception of him, with that which his uncle would have given his son, or even himself, under similar circumstances, though Lord Fitz-Clare's manner was, for *him*, unusually kind; he felt, however, daily more sensibly, that if there was nothing of which he could actually complain in his father's manner, his actions were most unkind. His circumstances now forced him into a state of complete and bitter dependence upon his father; for in the disturbed state of the times, he could not rely on drawing any revenue from his estate in Virginia, and his resources, independent of this, had been insufficient to discharge the gaming debts he had contracted before he left England; and he had been forced to lay himself under the obligation of receiving from Lord Fitz-Clare, the remaining sum necessary to discharge them. He felt now, as if by this act he had sold himself into slavery; nor could he help believing, that Lord Fitz-Clare endeavored to make his situation, with regard to pecuniary matters, as oppressive as possible, in order to force him into compliance with his views. For he never hinted at the necessity of making him even the slenderest regular allowance for his expenditure, though he would, from time to time, dole out to him such sums as he thought necessary to maintain an appearance and style suitable to his rank in life.

This state of things grew daily more irksome to Edgar, and as his own reflections were continually becoming more painful and disagreeable, he sought to divert his thoughts from unpleasant subjects, by occasionally resorting to the gaming-table. This species of excitement had always possessed peculiar fascination

for him, and in his present state of mind, he found its abstraction more difficult to resist than formerly, especially as he was at first very successful. The money which he gained by these successes, emancipated him, in a great measure, from the pecuniary bondage, which had so galled and chafed his spirit; but it is dangerous to tempt fortune too far, and the hour of reverse came at last. And a dark hour indeed it was, when it came. In the vain hope that Fortune would smile again, he renewed and doubled his bets, with all the internal eagerness of desperation, though, with a powerful effort he repressed all external indications of the tempest which raged within; and never did a ruined man rise from the gaming-table with more dignified and graceful composure. His pride sustained him completely while the eye of his fellow-man was upon him; but when he found himself alone, he gave way to all the bitterness of his soul, and cursed the hour of his birth. It was not in Edgar's nature, however, to give way to useless lamentation, but rather to oppose evil fortune with all the strength of a mind of indomitable pride and energy, and an imagination ready and fertile in expedients. But on this occasion, he exhausted himself in vain with fruitless meditations, which ended only in deeper conviction of the hopelessness of his case; for he saw no quarter from which relief could possibly be hoped. A few months since, and there had been the strongest reason to believe that he would inherit Lord Fitz-Clare's title and estates, from the declining state of his brother's health. But care, strict attention to the advice of a skillful physician, change of air, and, above all, the new impetus given to his spirits by the change of his views and character, had apparently wrought wonders for him, and his health, though delicate, seemed in a great measure restored.

As Edgar's hope of ever being able to offer his hand to Ellen Clifford, was closely connected with the expectation of the death of Lord Francis, he had himself shuddered at the feeling of disappointment which often chilled his heart, when he reflected on this event as no longer probable. At such times, he would recall the horror which Ellen had expressed, when he had ventured to intimate to her that he connected a feeling of hope with such

an event ; yet he would endeavor to restore himself to his own good opinion, by determining that he was the creature of fate, and irresistibly compelled by circumstances to cherish hopes from which natural feelings shrank as criminal.

In such a moment as the present, these feelings recurred with redoubled force ; it appeared to him, upon the review of his life, as if all the leading events which determined his fate, had been under the control of an evil and cruel destiny, and he felt a sort of stern pride in hardening himself against its unjust inflictions. To appear before his father again in the character of a suppliant, to act penitence for errors, or rather for imprudences, as he deemed them, into which he believed he had been hurried by Lord Fitz-Clare's ungenerous conduct, was impossible. He felt that death itself would be preferable. Could he but have been assured that death was indeed a dreamless sleep, he would not have hesitated for a moment to end the ills of life at once, for all dread of the physical horrors of death was lost in his mental agonies ; but then to take this irrevocable step, without one ray of light to show him the unknown country into which he was plunging no more to return, his spirit shrank from, and he determined rather to brave the evils of his present lot, than to rush upon a state so awful and mysterious.

One method only of extricating himself from his present embarrassments suggested itself, and to this he felt the strongest aversion—stronger, perhaps, from the secret conviction that to this he must come at last ; and from the reflection that Lord Fitz-Clare would at last gain the triumph of having forced him into compliance with his views. This expedient was to offer his hand to Lady Julia Somerset. Of its acceptance he did not doubt a moment ; nor would any one have accused him of vanity for entertaining such an opinion : for the lady exhibited such unequivocal manifestations of partiality for him, notwithstanding his neglect, that it would have been impossible, for even an ordinary observer, to doubt the state of her affections. And with the additional lights of self-love, Edgar was entirely aware of his power over Lady Julia's heart ; but the only pleasurable sensation which this consciousness had ever afforded him, was the momentary

gratification of vanity, when he perceived her, "the admired of all observers," and surrounded by the incense of flattery, steal anxious and timid glances toward him, as if to solicit his approbation.

He had been very cautious in bestowing any peculiar mark of attention on Lady Julia, as he was determined to give Lord Fitz-Claire no pretext for asserting, that his honor was pledged to pay his addresses to her; and he could not help feeling a sort of contemptuous pity for the love which seemed to live upon neglect and coldness. But now he felt that his hour was come, and it was useless longer to struggle against fate; there was no alternative: ruin, shame, and disgrace stared him in the face, and there was no means of escape but in marrying Lady Julia. He thought of Ellen Clifford, of the vows of eternal constancy he had made to her at their last interview, of the promises she had made him—and bitter tears dimmed his eyes. He felt ashamed, even in solitude, of this weakness, and repeated, internally: "I am lost! the creature of circumstances, the sport of destiny—let me then yield to the irresistible decree of fate, without degrading myself by the weakness of lamentation. Yet he sighed again deeply, as he thought of the destruction of those hopes, which had so long constituted his brightest dream of happiness. In vain he endeavored to shut out the thoughts which seemed to rise with almost magical rapidity and vividness, as if to torture him. Unable to bear his own reflections longer, he hastily swallowed a large opiate, that he might at least experience a temporary forgetfulness of his torments; but fearful visions haunted his sleep. At one time, he dreamed that he stood before the altar, and Ellen was beside him; but as he was about to place the ring on her finger, her form and features were suddenly transformed into those of Lady Julia, and he uttered so deep a sigh that it roused him from his slumbers, for a moment. But the influence of the opiate he had swallowed, oppressed his senses with a deathlike heaviness, and he slept again, and dreamed he stood at the entrance of a lofty and venerable-looking church. Strains of unearthly sweetness floated on the air, and he recognized with rapture the silvery tones of Ellen's voice; and her form appeared

before him, as he had last seen her. She wore a simple white robe, and her dark hair fell over her shoulders ; but her eyes were no longer fixed upon him ; her glance fell coldly on him, as if she knew him not ; and when he attempted to approach her, he felt chained by an irresistible power to the spot where he stood, and a voice whispered in his ear, "it is too late." Suddenly, the scene changed ; and he was again at the gaming-table with his late associates : but though their features were represented by his fancy, with an almost fearful vividness, each face wore some demoniac expression of triumph and insult, or contempt ; they seemed to grin at him, and mark him.

Edgar arose next morning unrefreshed, and feeling ill in body as well as mind ; he was shocked at his own haggard and feverish appearance : for there was nothing he feared more than that any outward indication should betray the internal tortures he suffered. He dressed himself with more than usual care, appeared at the places of fashionable resort he was accustomed to frequent, and those who were acquainted with the events of the last night, were struck with admiration and astonishment at the brilliant sallies of his wit, and the sparkling gayety of his conversation.

Lord Fitz-Clare and Edgar met that night at a rout at Lady D.'s, where the élite of the fashionable world thronged ; and Lord Fitz-Clare was no less surprised than delighted, to see him offer his arm to Lady Julia, and distinguish her by marks of peculiar attention. Could even *he*, however, have read Edgar's heart, he would have hesitated to enforce the sacrifice of his happiness to the views of interest, or the schemes of ambition. He would have dreaded too, the result of the fearful conflict of the strongest passions of the human heart, which now warred within the bosom of his son. Edgar's eye caught his father's glance of delighted surprise, though transient and quickly averted, and he felt a sharper pang, if possible, added to his sufferings, in the consciousness that Lord Fitz-Clare was triumphing in the destruction of his happiness. He cursed his fate for having given him such a father, and for a moment was unconscious that Lady Julia, his evil genius as he pronounced her in the bitterness of

his heart, hung upon his arm, and was addressing him in her sweetest and softest tones.

Never had his powers of self-command and dissimulation been so severely tried before, but with an effort of which he scarcely believed himself capable, he succeeded in topping his part. Lady Julia's delight at his attentions was too evident not to attract general observation ; and as she laid her head upon her pillow that night, the anticipations of hope and images of fancy melted gradually into bright dreams of happiness, not more unreal than the visions of bliss, which her waking thoughts presented, were destined to be.

"Happy's the wooing
That's not long a doing,"

says the old song ; but Edgar's experience did not verify the truth of this assertion, for his suit seemed to hurry to a conclusion with a success and a rapidity which he felt to be almost fearful. And yet there was nothing to be gained by delay ; the state of his affairs made his speedy marriage with Lady Julia indispensably necessary, and he would at last be relieved from the intolerable necessity of feigning love, when his real sentiments were much more nearly allied to aversion than to affection.

The day was now actually fixed for his marriage, and he felt dismayed to see all the necessary arrangements hurrying to a rapid conclusion. He feared to regard the operations of the machinery, which he had himself put in motion, and shuddered at the flight of irrevocable time. Lady Julia, happily for herself, had a temper unsuspicious as a child's ; accustomed, too, to admiration, to prosperity, and success, she was always ready to believe what she wished, she was therefore completely deceived as to the state of Edgar Clifford's feelings, by the mask which he assumed. The present offered to her a succession of scenes of almost unmingled happiness, and the gay colors of hope cast on the vista of futurity their false and fleeting brilliancy. This very joyousness of spirit made Lady Julia's society peculiarly oppressive to Edgar Clifford ; a perpetual attempt at gayety in the

present state of his feelings was almost intolerable, and he would have preferred the dullest person in existence as a companion, to his gay and brilliant betrothed.

It is impossible for the most skillful dissembler to conceal the working of powerful emotion entirely and at all times ; in the hours of domestic privacy the mask will sometimes fall unconsciously to the wearer—if no word betrays the thoughts and emotions, external indications of the hidden sentiments of the heart will sometimes be visible to the attentive and interested observer. Lord Fitz-Clare marked the air of abstraction and sadness, which sometimes stole over Edgar's countenance, often after uttering the gayest sallies, and making the most brilliant display of his rare conversational powers ; he knew that this expression of sadness marked the real and habitual state of his feelings, because he perceived that it arose unconsciously and involuntarily. He was concerned at these evidences of Edgar's reluctance to complete the engagement he had formed with Lady Julia, but this concern did not make him relent or falter for a moment in his purpose of hurrying the marriage as rapidly as possible to a conclusion ; indeed it rather confirmed him in doing so, for he doubted whether Edgar possessed sufficient firmness and wisdom, to persist in consulting his future interest and glory, in opposition to the strong dictates of inclination. The steps which Edgar had already taken toward the completion of his favorite scheme, had already raised him greatly in Lord Fitz-Clare's estimation, for he thought it proved him to possess the only quality that was wanting to enable him to win the golden gifts of fortune, and the proud rewards of fame—the power of resisting present inclination, of crushing natural feeling to attain the great future ends of life. He continued to lavish new favors upon Edgar, and was careful not to convey either by word or look the slightest intimation that he was aware of the real state of his heart ; on the contrary, he avoided all opportunities of being alone with his son, lest he should be tempted to make some disclosure, which it would be most politic he should not hear. He might, however, have spared himself this trouble, for Edgar would as soon have thought of attempting to sap the Rock of Gibraltar, or of endea-

voring to thaw an iceberg, as of trying to shake Lord Fitz-Clare's determination, or seeking to soften his heart.

Edgar endeavored earnestly to banish all remembrance of Ellen Clifford, not because he thought it criminal to indulge tender recollections of the woman he loved, when on the eve of marriage with another, but because the emotions which such reminiscences called forth were injurious to his peace, and made it almost impossible for him to preserve the appearance of graceful composure, he thought it dignified and necessary for him to maintain. The pangs of regret, which the recollection of Ellen Clifford awakened in his heart, were not produced chiefly by a retrospect of his own insincere and ungenerous conduct toward her, nor by remorse for his broken vows of constancy, nor by apprehensions of the sorrow which his faithlessness might cause her ; no, the bitterest anguish which wrung his soul when thinking of Ellen, was purely selfish ; he grieved that she was *lost to him*, and he would rather have been assured that the remainder of her life would be passed in unavailing regrets for his sake, than that she should find happiness in other sources, and cease to think of him. The hope that she would never marry another was his greatest consolation.

Who that witnessed the splendor of the bridal procession, that saw Lady Julia in the pride of beauty and radiance of joy, could have believed that the feelings of the bridegroom, resembled rather those of the captive than the conqueror in the triumphal procession ? He might have said with Byron :

“ My soul ne'er deigns nor dares complain
Though grief and passion there rebel.”

His pride sustained him in the hour of trial, and he bore his part in the pageant with his usual grace and elegance, nor allowed himself a moment to reflect that his destiny was sealed. Lord Fitz-Clare regarded him with unmingled pride and admiration ; he exulted in the realization of his hopes ; and visions of the future greatness and honors of his house, arose in his excited imagination.

Edgar availed himself of one of the chief advantages of his

situation, by throwing off speedily all the galling restraints which had been necessarily imposed on him in the character of a lover. All the little attentions, "the small sweet courtesies of life," which are so necessary to the happiness of domestic intercourse, were thrown aside, as far as was compatible with that degree of politeness, which he considered it essential to his character as a gentleman to maintain. Lady Julia's day-dreams of bliss gradually faded away, and the bitterness of her mortification was in proportion to the elation of hope, which had swelled her heart. Anger, disappointment, mortified vanity, and wounded love agitated her breast, with a thousand painful and conflicting emotions; but for the present, the emotions of wounded love were the strongest, and she endeavored to persuade herself that this appearance of estrangement on the part of her husband, had arisen from some misunderstanding. She accused herself of levity and thoughtlessness, and began a serious review of her past conduct, but she recalled nothing which she could suppose might possibly have displeased him. Yet, she repeated to herself, his ideas of propriety are in some degree fastidious, from peculiar delicacy of feeling, and I know by my own heart that trifling acts which would entirely escape my observation in any other person, from him, often wound and irritate me. I will endeavor, in future, to be more observant of his tastes and humors.

And Lady Julia did endeavor to please, with more patience than could possibly have been expected from a belle and a spoiled child of fortune, for some time. Edgar did not repulse her attentions with any thing like rudeness or unkindness; on the contrary, his manner was always gentle and polite toward her; yet it became evident even to her, that she possessed not the slightest power of interesting or amusing him. A fit of uncontrollable vexation and bitter disappointment, at length, vented itself in reproaches which could no longer be restrained; this however, produced no other effect than to banish Edgar almost entirely from home. His frequent absence and increased estrangement made Lady Julia miserable, for by a strange, though unhappily not an uncommon perversity of feeling, her blind

idolatry for him appeared to increase in proportion to his indifference toward her, and she resolved to confine her feelings in her almost bursting heart, and endeavor to render his home attractive. For this purpose, she assembled around her the most brilliant and agreeable society which the fashionable and literary world could afford, and spared no pains to gratify the elegant tastes of her husband. But Lady Julia had been accustomed to the uncontrolled indulgence of every feeling, and she did not readily learn the first severe lessons of self-control, or the difficult task of dissimulation; often after sparkling with unusual splendor at an evening party, the remainder of the night was spent in tears and hysterics; her spirits were flighty and unequal, her humors often capricious, nor did she find it possible always to abstain from insinuating reproaches to Edgar, though she had learned not to give direct expression to them.

Edgar was wearied and provoked by Lady Julia's conduct, yet he could not silence the reproaches of his own conscience for having deceived her; though he generally quieted them by the reflection, that she had been deceived rather by her own infatuation, than by any act of his. He contrasted her conduct with the course which he believed Ellen Clifford would have pursued under similar circumstances; and at every such comparison, his estimate of his wife's character was lowered.

Edgar Clifford was not disposed to indulge useless regrets, or tender recollections, he did not often voluntarily dwell on thoughts connected with Ellen; but her image frequently intruded unbidden on his memory. All that was lovely, fair, or excellent, was so closely associated in his mind with remembrances of her, that he found it vain to attempt to destroy the numberless associations which were perpetually renewing themselves. But since his brightest dreams—his most cherished hopes of happiness were destroyed, he resolved to obtain the prize for which he had sold himself, and win his way to the power and fame, which his father had always taught him to believe were the highest objects of human ambition. Lady Julia's ample fortune not only enabled him to extricate himself from his embarrassments; but to maintain an elegant and splendid style of living, which gratified

his pride, and accorded with his tastes. And in this respect, at least, his wife's conduct met with his most entire approbation ; for her naturally liberal disposition, and infatuated devotion to himself, made her delight in considering all her possessions as his ; and so far from claiming a right to indulgences which her fortune entitled her to expect, she seemed to prefer considering them as gifts of generosity from him, than as just claims. But wealth was in Edgar Clifford's estimation but a secondary object. He resolved to win the proud and perilous heights of fame, though his course should be marked with blood and tears. His heart burned with unquenchable ambition, like the condemned spirits in *Vathek*, whose hearts were changed to living fire in their bosoms ; and to win a name which should reach to distant lands and future ages, was now the object of his thoughts by day, and his dreams by night.

His visions of love had been doomed to disappointment, for their realization depended on causes beyond his own control, and his evil destiny had prevailed against him ; but it rested with himself to convert the hopes of ambition into realities. A proud consciousness of talent and of his natural endowments made him feel, that with the advantages of fortune and position which he now possessed, he was sure of attaining the distinction he sought ; for with such qualifications, and placed in such circumstances, nothing could be wanting to insure success, but an energetic and unfaltering will, and this he felt within.

He made pleasure now completely subservient to the purposes of ambition ; having paid his debts of honor, he forswore the gaming-table, as he found sufficient excitement in the persuance of his ambitious schemes, without again resorting to the perilous fascinations of chance. Edgar Clifford became distinguished in Parliament, not more for the splendor of his eloquence, than for the strength and subtlety of his reasoning powers ; he took the ministerial side in politics, and exerted all the force of his talents, all his arts of address, to crush the American rebellion. Yet it is hard to shut out wholly the light of truth, or to listen long to her without retaining some recollection of her oracles, however unwillingly our attention may have been given. Much that he

had heard and seen in America, while he was an inmate of Woodbourne, recurred to his memory, and there were times when the views and opinions which he had heard his uncle urge with so much eloquence and feeling, did not appear to him altogether so chimerical as he wished to think them, and always asserted them to be.

His political career had hitherto been brilliant and successful; but as the desires of ambition are infinite, new views, new schemes, new desires were continually adding strength to the fever of excitement which consumed his heart: for the strength and coolness of his reasoning powers checked the soarings of a fervid imagination, and showed too clearly how impossible it was that these visions should ever be realized. He who can give himself up to the reveries of enthusiasm, until he believes them to be truths, may from the very firmness of his faith and ignorance of the consequences of his course, which clear and strong reason would suggest, realize what have hitherto been considered impossibilities; but it is otherwise with him, who with unusual strength of reasoning, possesses no enthusiasm, no faith in truth itself. The dictates of his reason will chill the fervor of his fancy, and paralyze the strength of his exertions, so that he can never perform those deeds which shall call forth the wonder and admiration of posterity.

Though Edgar had loved Ellen Clifford, with a love differing in kind, and greatly exceeding in degree, any which he had ever felt for any other human being; and the deep regret, the bitter disappointment, which his forced abandonment of her—for so he considered it—had occasioned him, had thrown a shade over his path and blighted his fondest hopes; yet the depth of the gloom which at times oppressed him, when he thought of Woodbourne and its inmates, had its origin in sources yet deeper. Disappointed love mingled its bitterness, with that of a disappointment bitterer still; the divine rays of truth, of love, of virtue, which had dawned on his soul after he became an inmate of Woodbourne, had been since obscured by a thick vail of darkness.

Edgar sat plunged in a profound reverie, as the events of his

life passed in rapid succession through his memory, and he murmured almost unconsciously : " I have obtained the price of my freedom and what has it availed me ? Has it purchased for me a single hour of such happiness as I enjoyed at Woodbourne ? And after all, in this frail and fleeting state of existence, what can compensate us for even a few brief hours of happiness, even though this enjoyment should be founded in weakness or delusion ? Fame, glory, power, wealth, the idols at whose shrine I immolated all that my heart held most dear—to propitiate whom I stifled the voice of conscience ; vain, empty mockeries are ye all ! Oh, my father ! what a bitter cup has your cursed ambition prepared for me to drink ! "

These words had scarcely died away on his lips, when he heard a loud knock at the door of his apartment. " Pshaw, Lady Julia, I suppose, " he uttered, " coming to torment me, either with tenderness or reproaches—though of the two evils I should prefer the latter. "

The knock was again repeated ; but he was sure now that it was not Lady Julia's. On opening the door, he perceived a man who had evidently ridden far and fast, and in whose countenance, the marks of concern were as strongly depicted as those of fatigue.

" I should ask you to pardon this abrupt and alarming intrusion, " said the stranger, " were the circumstances of the case such as admitted of delay. I am the neighbor, allow me also to say the friend, though an humble one, of your brother Lord Francis, and it is to fulfill his wish that I come. "

Edgar's heart smote him at those words—he dreaded to hear the next words which the stranger should utter ; he turned so pale that Mr. Vincent, for such was the name of the messenger, touched with these signs of emotion, said, in a tone of kindness, " Lord Francis is still living, and most anxious to see you ; indeed the physicians entertain some hope of his recovery, though he appears convinced that his death is rapidly and inevitably approaching. His afflicting situation has been caused entirely by his noble and disinterested exertions in the cause of humanity. A fire broke out in the house of one of his tenants, and it was

discovered that in the hurry and consternation of the moment, a child had been left sleeping in an upper apartment ; the father was absent and none was found but your brother, who was willing to peril his own life, to save that of the child. He succeeded in preserving its life, but with the sacrifice, I fear, of his own ; for the exertion brought on, almost immediately, an alarming rupture of a blood-vessel."

CHAPTER XLV.

The messenger of God
With golden trump I see,
With many other angels more
That sound and call for me.

The Bride's Burial.

EDGAR CLIFFORD lost no time in obeying the summons of his brother ; and strange was the mixture of feelings, which filled his heart as he pursued his rapid journey. Though, as we have said before, he had never felt sentiments of friendship, nor even the ordinary regard which usually subsists between children of the same parents, for Francis ; yet now, when he thought of him, lying on the bed of death, cut off in the very flower of his youth, and about to sink either into the dark land of dreamless sleep, or to launch into the yet more awful unknown world—if it be indeed true that there is a world of spirits—a sentiment of painful compassion, mingled with awe, filled his heart. And then, too, a remorseful pang visited him, when he remembered, that he had once contemplated the probability of this event, almost with hope ; for he had viewed it as the only means by which his happiness could be secured, by an union with Ellen Clifford.

He shuddered to remember this ; yet involuntarily afterward the thought suggested itself, that his destiny in life had been either the sport of chance, or had been controlled by evil and malignant influences. Had this event taken place but a year ago, how different his destiny might have been !

Edgar was alone in his traveling-carriage, there was none to hear him, and he groaned aloud in the anguish of his heart ; his own thoughts were hateful to him, and the appearance of nature harmonized well with the gloom of his soul. He looked upon

the sky : a few dim stars, struggling through the mists of night, alone were visible ; the gloomy and uncertain light in which every object was clothed, made nature seem wrapped in a funeral shroud. " And such is the darkness which covers the fate of man," he said. " Verily, there is consolation, if not truth, in the creed which teaches, that when this brief and troubled existence shall have passed from the earth, another glorious and immortal shall succeed it in heaven." As this reflection passed through his mind, he thought of the delight it would once have imparted to Ellen to know that he indulged even a passing wish that the faith on which her hopes were rested, might be founded in truth.

During this long night—for to him it seemed interminable—he had ample time for reflection, but his thoughts were filled with gloom and perplexity ; the remembrance of the past awakened regret, the bitterer, that it was unavailing ; the present seemed a feverish dream, and clouds and thick darkness appeared to hang over the future. The dread he had felt of arriving at the abode of death, was succeeded by a wish for any change that might forcibly give his mind a new direction ; and it was with a sensation of relief he perceived, as the cold gray tints of morning threw their sad lights around, that he had approached very nearly to the residence of his brother.

It had been more than a year since Lord Francis had chosen this remote country-seat as a permanent residence ; and Lord Fitz-Clare felt too little interest in his movements to remonstrate with him on thus withdrawing from the world ; indeed he thought retirement best suited one whom he deemed so feeble in character and so ordinary in intellect. After the death of Mr. Morton's brother, he had immediately departed for Virginia, and Francis felt he had then no tie to bind him to London. Though his spirit was no longer grieved or crushed by a sense of intellectual inferiority, for it was strengthened and sustained by the humbling yet elevating doctrine, which teaches that we are all equal in the eye of God ; and that all the endowments and gifts which excite the pride of man are but temporary gifts, for the use of which we are responsible to the Great

Giver ; yet he was impressed with a deep belief of his own deficiencies. As the sense of responsibility became stronger, as he became more fully acquainted with the doctrines of Christianity, he felt that a sphere of action and usefulness was necessary for his happiness, nor was any bitterness mingled with the consciousness that this sphere could be neither brilliant nor exalted.

A residence in the country, he believed, would not only accord best with his simple tastes and quiet habits—for self-gratification was not now the first object of importance in his estimation—but would also afford the best opportunities for that sort of usefulness for which his abilities and education fitted him. He judged wisely in choosing this mode of life, as one best calculated to promote both his usefulness and happiness ; for here the glance of contemptuous disapprobation, so withering to a gentle spirit, was never turned upon him, and left wholly to himself he gained more confidence and strength. His humble, yet earnest endeavors to do good to his fellow creatures, became more successful, as he learned experience from repeated failures, and they had always the blessed effect of bringing peace to his own bosom, for he was conscious of the purity and sincerity of the motives which influenced his actions. His ignorance of the world, his defective education, and self-distrust, had subjected him to innumerable failures and disappointments ; yet he did not sink under these disappointments, as his natural temperament would have inclined him to do ; that love “ which contendeth with all things, and overcometh all things,” continually prompted him to new exertions, and imparted consolation in despondency.

When Edgar crossed the threshold, a sudden chillness seized his heart, he feared to proceed or make any inquiries, and paused some minutes, uncertain what to do. He was, however, soon relieved by the appearance of a young man of gentlemanly air, who accosted him with a tone and manner at once kind and cautious, as the expected brother of Lord Francis, who, he said, had fallen asleep.

“ My brother yet lives then,” said Edgar, drawing a long breath, as if relieved from a heavy load. “ How is he ? does there appear to be any hope of his recovery ? ”

The young man did not at once reply, but seemed to be considering in what manner he could preserve truth in his reply, and yet inflict no more pain than was absolutely necessary. At length, he said : " He sleeps quietly now, and seems to suffer little. I can not, however, conceal from you that the physicians consider him desperately ill ; yet they are by no means always infallible in their judgments. I am truly glad that you have arrived, for he has expressed great anxiety to see you ; but you must have had a very fatiguing journey, and had better take some rest and refreshment while your brother sleeps. Allow me to have you shown to an apartment."

Edgar expressed his thankful acquiescence in this proposal, and followed the servant, who had been summoned by a touch of the bell from Mr. Lindley, for such was the name of the young gentleman, to an apartment, after requesting that he might be called as soon as Lord Francis waked. His slumbers were brief and disturbed, and when the servant returned softly into the room, some hours afterward, to see if he were still sleeping, and to tell him that Lord Francis insisted that he should take his breakfast before he came into his apartment, he found him dressed, seeking to inhale refreshment from the morning breeze at an open window.

Edgar hastily breakfasted, and followed Mr. Lindley into the apartment of Lord Francis. His brother lay stretched upon the bed ; his form was so attenuated, his face so pale, so unearthly, that Edgar absolutely started at his first entrance, for death in all its terrors stood before him.

Francis perceived his emotion ; he smiled, and extended his hand toward him, saying : " This is very kind, very good in you, Edgar, to come so quickly. But I am afraid you have fatigued yourself very much." As he said this, he looked so earnestly and affectionately in Edgar's face, that he cast down his eyes ; for the undeserved and unrequited affection of his brother, called forth a sudden and irrepressible sensation of shame.

" Oh, no ! do not think of that. I am perfectly well, and should never hesitate to undergo twice the fatigue which this journey

has cost me, when I have any adequate motive. But let us think of what is of far more importance. How do you find yourself, this morning?"

"I am refreshed by the sweet sleep I have enjoyed; these temporary gleams of sunshine are all that I can now expect; the sands of life are running very low, and it was a consciousness of this, which so greatly increased my anxiety to see you before they were quite exhausted."

Mr. Lindley supposing the brothers wished to be alone, immediately withdrew, after requesting that he might be called, if Francis should require his assistance. "You see, I can not resign the office of chief nurse even into Mr. Clifford's hands," he said, with a smile. "If there is any thing of which I am vain, it is of my accomplishments in this department."

"No one but yourself, Lindley, would be inclined to assert their right to such a post, with such duties assigned to it," said Francis, with a look and smile, which spoke more plainly than words could have done, the sense he entertained of Lindley's kindness.

A pause of some minutes ensued, after Mr. Lindley had left the room, during which Francis seemed engaged in deep thought. Edgar sat silently beside him, and marked with concern, the ravages of sickness on his countenance, in which the expression of patient sweetness was touchingly mingled with the traces of suffering. He had never before beheld Francis with interest.

Francis was not prepared to expect sympathy or concern from Edgar, he was therefore surprised at the sorrow visible in his countenance, and said, in a tone of emotion: "I should not have called you away, Edgar, at a season when you are doubtless engaged in affairs of importance, merely to witness the last sad scenes of mortal suffering. God has raised up to me kind friends, who have rendered all the necessary, and more than all the necessary offices of assistance and sympathy. Stronger, deeper reasons, moved me to make my first and almost my last urgent request."

"Francis, I feel that I have deserved this reproach, though it is now too late to atone for my fault. It is not surprising that

you should look to strangers for assistance and consolation in an hour such as this, rather than to your brother, for I have never been a brother to you ; yet if—”

“ Stop, my dear brother,” said Francis, much distressed at Edgar’s emotion, “ you know not how little agitation this feeble frame can bear ; do not distress me by supposing that I meant even to insinuate a reproach. Could my heart be laid open before you, you would see that not one thought of inflicting pain on you had entered there. No Edgar, at this moment, my heart accuses me of an unkindness toward you in action, though not in feeling ; for I have permitted timidity, self-distrust, and pride—for that feeling may well be called pride, which makes us shrink from contempt and neglect, when it is necessary to meet and brave them—I have permitted these weak and cowardly feelings to prevent the performance of a sacred duty toward you.”

Francis sank back, exhausted by the unusual exertion he had made in speaking, and by the strength of his emotions ; but seeing Edgar look alarmed, he said, in a feeble tone : “ Do not be alarmed—do not ring for assistance—just give me the cordial Lindley prepared for me, in the cup on the table near you, I shall get over this weakness presently.”

Edgar obeyed his request, and entreated that he would not agitate himself farther, by any attempt at conversation for the present. Francis remained silent, after swallowing the drops, a few minutes, then said :

“ I feel quite recovered now—as strong, at least, as I shall ever be again ; time is too precious to be wasted, permit then the few hours I have left to be devoted to the purpose nearest my heart. Edgar, you never knew the bitter tears of humiliation, which a sense of my deficiencies and the contempt they excited, have drawn from me, when no eye saw me. I grieve for them no longer, I have long since ceased to regard them with mortification ; but yet the remembrance of them makes me painfully conscious of the disadvantages under which I address you, for the very fact of my belief in truths of unspeakable importance, would perhaps be to you an argument against their truth. Oh my brother, would that, for your sake, I had the eloquence of an angel

but for an hour, that I might compel you to listen to me—that I might persuade you even against your own will ! But remember, Edgar, I lie here a doomed man, knowing the sun may never rise on me again ; I have no natural enthusiasm of character to delude me—no strength of mind or body to sustain me ; must there not then be truth and vitality in that principle, which can enable me with calmness, and even at times with joyful hope, to wait the sure approach of the king of terrors ?”

Edgar looked with increasing surprise and interest at his brother. The accents and manner of Francis were those of simple, earnest truth ; and as he never attempted display on any occasion, but on the contrary, had always shrunk with sensitive alarm from attracting observation to his own feelings or character, it was scarcely to be supposed that now, when it was evident to all that his hours were numbered, he should affect sentiments he did not feel. His emotion was evidently genuine, nor could it be accounted for, by supposing it to proceed from an enthusiastic temperament, or heated imagination ; for he had always been characterized by a want of fervor and enthusiasm.

It has been observed by many, that family resemblances become apparent in sickness and death, which had never been so in health ; and the ingenious Sir Thomas Browne’s attempt to account for this fact, by the supposition, that there is a peculiar type of face belonging in common to the members of every family, but which is so much varied by the adventitious circumstances of coloring, fullness, expression, &c., that the resemblances between individuals possessing this common type often escapes observation, until these accidental differences being removed, in a great measure, by the similar effects produced on all human countenances by the ravages of disease, the likeness between members of the same family is plainly perceived. It is certain, that at this moment, there was an expression in Francis’s dark eye, as it dwelt earnestly and wistfully on his face, which reminded Edgar forcibly of Ellen Clifford. He saw the same glance again which had once thrilled his heart, and again the sweet sounds of Ellen’s voice seemed to implore him to listen to the very truths to which his brother now urged his attention.

"What strange power does this delusion possess," murmured Edgar; then suddenly recollecting himself, as he perceived that Francis was eagerly endeavoring to catch the import of his words, he said, in a gentle tone: "The best creed, my dear brother, is that which can best support the hopes of man in an hour such as this." He averted his eyes, as he uttered these words, for he could not bear the appealing look, which seemed to search his very soul, as if to discover in what sense these words were spoken, and if any ground of hope could be drawn from them.

Francis withdrew his gaze, as if his question was answered by Edgar's instantly averting his eyes. He shook his head mournfully, and said:

"I fear, Edgar, this is but a kind subterfuge to sooth my weakness, and to lull me with false hope; it is administered as you would give an opiate to a dying person. Do not seek to deceive me, it is useless, mistaken kindness. My faith can not now be shaken. I know that my belief is founded on divine truth. I have proved the truth of the creed, which we were educated to neglect and despise; and how greatly have I longed to impart this belief, to explain my feelings to those who are nearest to me, but I was withheld by weak and cowardly fears, until it is almost too late. But you have been so kind as to come; you will bear my last words to my father and mother. My father I suppose will scarcely come, he is always so much engaged; and my mother's nerves are so weak, that I begged Mr. Vincent to spare her the shock of acquainting her with my situation, until it was all over."

Francis turned his head toward the window, as he uttered these words, and Edgar saw him brush a tear away which glistened in his eye. Edgar scarcely knew how to reply, for he was aware that his father was engaged in concluding very important business, and that he did not intend setting out, until many hours after the time he had started. After a moment's hesitation, he replied: "My father will certainly be here, in the course of a few hours. I am sure he will not fail to come."

Francis cast another look of mournful appeal in Edgar's face, and perceived visible signs of strong emotion. Deeply touched,

he laid his cold and wasted hand gently on his brother's, and said : "Perhaps all is best as it is. Habit is strong almost as death, and I know not whether even *now*, I could throw off the habitual awe I have always felt for my father, enough to speak to him with freedom ; and he would perhaps ascribe my sentiments, to the natural weakness he has always so much despised."

"Do not let your mind dwell on such things," said Edgar ; "you view my father's sentiments in a wrong light—you judge him too harshly."

"Truth is sacred, you should not sacrifice it in the vain endeavor to spare my feelings. I do not entertain one unkind or resentful thought toward my father. I know that it was natural, though certainly not entirely excusable, that he should have felt mortification at the deficiencies of his first-born son, the unworthiness of the heir to his title and estate ; and there is nothing so bitter as wounded pride. I suffered myself to sink beneath his contempt and disapprobation without a struggle. I, too, was blamable, for I might at least have endeavored to improve the portion of talents which God had given me. But all this is over now—his pride can never again be wounded by me ; and though my father is not wont to relent or reproach himself, should you ever know that kind, gentle, or self-accusing thoughts arise in his mind concerning me, tell him that I forgave him, that I loved him, that I prayed for him to the last ; and tell him too, that if it would be grateful to his feelings to fulfill my last request, that I beg him to examine the record of divine inspiration, for my sake ; to judge for himself, whether it is indeed a cunningly devised fable, or the Word of God !"

"I will truly, faithfully fulfill your request," said Edgar, while he thought at the moment he uttered these words, how hopeless such a petition addressed to Lord Fitz-Clare, would be.

"May the blessings, the thanks of a dying man rest upon you ; and yet, Edgar, the fulfillment of this request will not be sufficient to satisfy me. Your eternal welfare is dear to me as that of my father ; will you not promise, for my sake, to give this great and important subject, at least an attentive examination and consideration ? If you knew the change that the knowl-

edge and belief of Christian truth has wrought in my heart, you could not doubt its power and efficacy ; for what merely human principle has force to change the whole tone of feeling and character ? Yet you never knew my secret soul, the inward workings of my heart, and therefore can not feel the strength of an argument, which to me carries irresistible conviction ; my life has so imperfectly illustrated these divine truths, that even had you been acquainted with the course of it, I could not appeal to this with any confidence. Would that you could have seen some striking exemplification of the purity, the beauty, and strength of Christian principle !"

Francis paused from utter inability to say more ; the light which shone in his eye, the bright hectic spot which became visible in his pale cheek, showed how strongly his feelings were excited. How vividly did the conclusion of his brother's speech recall Ellen Clifford to Edgar's remembrance ; no motive of caution now operated to restrain him, for he spoke to one on the threshold of eternity, and he found relief in giving vent to long suppressed feelings. " I have known," he said, " the purest, the loveliest of human beings, who professed these principles. She was dear to me as life itself, nor do I believe her love was less than my own ; for it was purer, more disinterested, totally without alloy of vanity, or worldly feeling."

Francis regarded Edgar with a mingled expression of the most extreme surprise and strongest interest. " How then," he asked, " did you conquer this attachment ? Why did you give her up ?"

" I have never conquered it. I was forced to give her up ; yet I know not that I could have obtained her hand, though I possessed her heart ; for her affection, her sense of duty toward her father, and her religious creed, opposed formidable, if not insuperable objections on her part. Yet I might, perhaps, have conquered these, and have been happy, had it not been for the cursed and unrelenting ambition of my father."

" Dreadful !" said Francis, shuddering. " Remember, Edgar, you have always been the cherished object of my father's pride, and affections. Do not speak thus."

" I did not mean," resumed Edgar, in a gentler tone, " to

shock your feelings, though my language is only that of truth. You should have said that I have always been the object of my father's pride ; I have no belief in the affection of a father, who can coolly and deliberately compel a son to sacrifice his happiness for the accomplishment of ambitious and worldly-minded schemes. At least three years ago Lord Fitz-Clare determined it to be necessary for my advancement to marry Lady Julia Somerset ; and though he knew my deep-rooted aversion to this plan, and suspected, too, that I loved another, he never faltered in his purpose, until he compelled me to become the instrument of my own misery."

"I can not understand" said Francis, "how he could have compelled you to take such a step against your will. Your nature is not weak, nor yielding."

The proud heart of Edgar Clifford had never brooked pity, and scarcely ever borne even sympathy ; but there was something in the character and situation of Francis, which completely disarmed his pride, and he was involuntarily soothed by the strong and unaffected sympathy expressed in his voice and manner. He proceeded to give Francis a rapid sketch of the circumstances which had placed him in a state of pecuniary dependence on his father, and described briefly, yet very forcibly, the agonies and conflicts of mind he had endured after his last losses at the gaming table, before he could bring himself to the determination of embracing the only honorable alternative, for such he termed it, which was left him to discharge debts that he could not suffer to remain unpaid, without forfeiting his character as a gentleman.

Francis sighed deeply, when Edgar had concluded his narration, and said : "How bitterly does your narration make me regret that terms of confidence have never subsisted between us ! All this misery might then have been prevented. Could I but have suspected the circumstances in which you were placed ; had you only confided your feelings to me, it would have given me pleasure to assist you to the utmost extent of my power, and though this would not have enabled me to offer you wealth, still it would have been sufficient to prevent the necessity of such a

sacrifice, not only of your own happiness, but of another's. A few months ago, my death would have relieved you from this painful necessity, as you conceived it to be ; would that it could now avail you !"

A burning blush of shame overspread Edgar's countenance at the cutting but undesigned reproach which his brother's speech conveyed ; and a bitter pang of remorse, too, shot through his heart, when he remembered that his dearest hopes were once intimately connected with the death of one, who forgot, even in his last hours, his own sufferings, in sympathy for him.

Francis perceived that Edgar was too strongly under the influence of painful emotion to reply, and he hastened to endeavor to dispel the impression his words had made, though he little suspected the cause which had given them such poignancy. "I spoke foolishly, rashly ; what is past can not be recalled, and it is worse than useless to dwell upon reflections which make retrospection more bitter. You must remember, my dear brother, that you have the happiness of another in your power, who, you acknowledge, is devotedly attached to you. You can not blame *her* for having trusted you, believed you ; your own unhappiness will be alleviated by doing your duty toward her."

Edgar shook his head. "It is impossible to estimate the difficulties, the trials, of such a situation as mine, unless you had been placed in similar circumstances. Your counsel is good, but you know not the impossibility of following it. To feign love daily, is not only insupportable, but impossible ; and there is no circumstance which could afford me so much relief, as for Lady Julia's devotion to be changed into quiet indifference. You may blame me, but it is my nature, I can not alter it."

"Many avenues are open to you," said Francis, "of worldly enjoyment ; can you not find sufficient interest or occupation in pursuing those to compensate you for your domestic unhappiness ?" For he perceived that any farther attempt to show him how wrong and ungenerous was the course of conduct and the state of feeling in which he permitted himself to indulge toward his wife, would not only be useless, but irritating.

"I have tried all, and found them to be but bitter mockeries.

Yet the spells of ambition are so potent, I find it impossible to shake them off; their feverish excitement is necessary to enable me to support existence."

"Believe, then, my dear brother, your own experience; you see that happiness can not be found in earthly things; will you not try if there is no heavenly hope held out to man to cheer him on his way? You know that my temper is naturally melancholy, almost desponding, and you can not disbelieve me *now*, when I assure you, that I never knew happiness, until my hopes were based on Divine Truth, and a new and living principle had entered my heart—until the dark and heavy mists of gloom and death, which seemed to rest on human life, were dispelled by the radiance of hope, love, and joy."

Edgar was alarmed to perceive the increasing feebleness of his brother's voice, and to mark the extreme exhaustion denoted by the pallor of his face, and the cold dew that stood on his forehead. "You must not prolong this agitating question farther, Francis, you are too weak; I will promise to investigate the subject to which you attach so much importance. Rest satisfied of this, for if your creed is founded on Divine Truth, as you think, nothing but examination can be necessary to produce belief."

"Remember," said Francis, looking earnestly upon him, and pressing his hand for a moment between his own. "Remember, a promise made to a dying brother is sacred."

Edgar's blood ran chill, at the death-like coldness of the hands that pressed his. He said hastily, "I will, indeed. I will remember."

Francis perceived the expression of horror, which Edgar could not entirely repress, and gently relaxed his hand. "Death is fearful to look upon," he said, in a low voice, which faltered from increasing weakness, "but to me it has lost its terrors. I thank God, that I have no strong ties on earth to break. Send for Lindley. I am not able to say more, now, and I can not be silent when you are by me. Perhaps I may revive after a little quiet. I have messages—"

Edgar entreated him to make no farther attempt to speak for the present, and hastened to fulfill his request, and summon Lind-

ley to his bedside. He requested Lindley to send for him immediately if Francis should again wish to see him, or require his assistance, and added that he should be near at hand, as he would not leave the garden. All the painful emotions which had so lately filled his mind, were for the moment, completely stilled by the blank feeling of desolation—the awe, not unmingled with horror, which so naturally arises in the human heart, at the immediate approach of death. “What then is life, and for what do I strive? I am of all men most miserable,” he mentally exclaimed. “I can not seize the passing pleasures of life, like those unthinking mortals who find their happiness in acting on the philosophy, which however humbling, is best suited to the actual condition of man, ‘Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.’ No, I am cursed with an ambitious and reflecting nature, which will not allow me the enjoyment even of those transient pleasures that we share with the beasts that perish; and I am doubly cursed in the strength of these reasoning powers, and the early emancipation from prejudice, that shuts out forever those delusive visions of hope from my mind, which now sustain my poor brother.

He rapidly traversed the garden walks, as these reflections, and the train of thought which they naturally suggested, passed through his mind, when he was interrupted by the approach of a servant. Edgar immediately guessed the errand, which the tearful eyes and genuine concern depicted on the countenance of John—his brother’s faithful servant for many years—sufficiently explained, and prepared immediately to follow him to the apartment of Francis.

He paused a minute at the door of the room, almost fearing to enter, when the sound of a voice in prayer arrested his attention. A clergyman knelt by the bedside of Francis, and in tones of feeling and solemnity, which thrilled the hearts of his hearers, offered up the prayer in the church service, for sick persons at the point of departure. Edgar was not insensible to its solemn and beautiful pathos, and for the moment, at least, he forgot to reflect that the faith which gave life and meaning to this prayer was delusive.

The awful change which usually precedes dissolution, had already marked the countenance of Francis, yet there was an expression diffused over it of indescribable peace and sweetness, which deprived even death of his horrors. He paused a minute or two after the voice of the clergyman had ceased, and seemed to breathe a silent prayer, then feebly motioned with his hand to Edgar, that he must approach.

Edgar approached his bedside, and gently took the hand, which Francis vainly endeavored to extend toward him. He pressed it, and Francis attempted to return the pressure, but so weakly, that the attempt was scarcely discernible. He fixed his dying glance earnestly, affectionately, and with such a touching look of appeal in Edgar's face, that it riveted itself in his heart, and often again in after years, did this glance return unbidden to Edgar's memory.

"Give my Bible," ~~he~~ said with much difficulty, "to my mother. Perhaps she will sometimes read it for my sake, even though her priests forbid her. If my father should come, bid him farewell for me—tell him that I die happy, sustained by Christian faith. And, dear Edgar, remember—"

Edgar said in a low voice of emotion, "I will fulfill all your requests."

"God bless you—bless you all," murmured Francis, but in accents so broken and low as to be scarcely audible. He made a sign to Lindley to admit more air into the apartment, but the order was scarcely obeyed, before he was released from all earthly suffering. A low sigh, a scarcely perceptible struggle, and the spirit had entered eternity.

Edgar remained standing for some minutes beside the breathless clay, as motionless and silent as itself, so deeply was he absorbed in considering the awful mystery of death, wondering what had become of the spirit, which had so lately animated the corpse before him. He bent him o'er the dead,

"And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there;
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of that placid cheek."

He gazed long and earnestly on the pale and tranquil face before him, and thought : If the faith be delusive, which could have imparted such peace, such repose, even in the last fearful moments of life, who would not choose error rather than truth ? With all my boasted philosophy, with all my strength of reasoning, shall I be able to meet death, with the heroism with which my poor brother faced it ?" A long drawn sigh burst from the very depths of his heart, and he felt an earnest wish, though alas, too late, as he looked on the lifeless form of Francis, that he had been to him as a brother. Warm tears gushed to his eyes, when he remembered the meek and uncomplaining gentleness, with which Francis had borne the neglect, the coldness, the contempt he had met with, even in the bosom of his own family ; for causes, too, which should have excited tenderness and compassion. How bitterly did he accuse his father's unkindness, his mother's neglect, and his own want of feeling toward him, whom the voice of kindness, whom the tears of repentance, could never reach more.

He was roused from this reverie, by the heavy sound of carriage wheels in the court-yard below, and he started with a feeling of horror, for it immediately occurred to him that his father had arrived. And to the last, he thought, what a gratification it would have been to poor Francis, would he only have hastened his journey a few hours !

"Lord Fitz-Clare is just alighting, had you not better meet him, Mr. Clifford," whispered Lindley, in a compassionate tone, "and break the mournful intelligence to him ?"

Edgar shrank from the idea of meeting his father at a moment such as this ; but thus urged, he knew not how to refuse. Lord Fitz-Clare's heart "sank chill within him" at the air of solemn and death-like stillness, which he perceived as soon as he entered the yard ; and his conjectures were confirmed by the disordered appearance of Edgar's dress, and the traces of tears still visible on his face.

Lord Fitz-Clare had anticipated the probability of finding that all was over ; and as he knew from the description Mr. Vincent had given him of the situation of Francis, that his recovery was hopeless, he scarcely knew whether or not to wish to find him

living. But as he drew near, he felt that it would be a relief to know he still lived, and he dreaded to ask Edgar if this were indeed the case. "I have been delayed," he said, "unfortunately, by indispensable and very important business. I hope, however, I have not been delayed too long."

"It is too late," replied Edgar. "Had you arrived an hour sooner, you would have found him living."

Lord Fitz-Clare turned extremely pale, and was visibly shocked; he covered his face with his hands, and remained silent for a few minutes, then said, without looking up, "Did he ask for me?"

"Yes," said Edgar, "almost his last words were to desire me to bid you farewell. He left also other messages for you."

"Did he express a wish for my arrival?" said Lord Fitz-Clare, in a voice less firm than usual.

"Yes," said Edgar, "a strong wish, though he uttered not a word of complaint at your delay."

"Had I thought he indeed wished it," said Lord Fitz-Clare, and he turned away without completing the sentence. Edgar thought he brushed away a tear, at least he hoped so. But if such a sign of weakness were indeed visible, it quickly disappeared.

A silence of several minutes ensued; and as Lord Fitz-Clare made no farther inquiries, Edgar proposed they should withdraw to a retired apartment, and led the way. It was seldom that any one ever addressed Lord Fitz-Clare, when it was evident that he wished to remain silent; and he had always found every troublesome attempt at familiarity, or unsolicited confidence, easily repressed by this impenetrable armor of reserve. Often in Edgar's days of childhood, and even of riper years, had the feelings which swelled his heart almost to bursting, been chilled and repressed by the dignified coldness of his father's manner. But on this occasion, he was almost unconscious of the cold and withering influence, which his father's spirit usually exerted over his own, for his heart was full of the scenes through which he had just passed; and he recommenced the conversation by saying, in a tone of emotion: "I found Francis perfectly aware that

there was no hope of his recovery ; indeed calmly waiting the approach of death, which he met with a degree of unaffected composure and heroism, that I could not have imagined possible."

" I should not have expected this. It is well that it was so ; but details on such subjects are painful, and should therefore, unless necessary, be avoided. We draw inferences rather from feeling than reason, on such occasions ; and ascribe to the mind, or the influence of some mysterious principle, effects which should be traced to bodily rather than mental causes."

Edgar had never before experienced a similar revulsion of feeling at his father's philosophy, and he replied with almost indignant earnestness : " We may err as greatly, I think, from the excess of what we call reason, as from its deficiency. No one could have witnessed the last moments of my brother, and believe that his calmness, his considerate kindness, his forgetfulness of his own sufferings, in the eagerness of his desire to benefit others, proceeded from mere bodily causes !"

Lord Fitz-Claire regarded him for a moment with visible surprise, and some emotion, then said : " I am little inclined at such a moment as this, to enter into any thing like argument or discussion ; but as I do not exactly understand the tendency of your remarks, I would ask, to what do you ascribe the state of mind you witnessed ?"

Edgar hesitated a moment, and colored slightly, for he knew the speech he had just made had evinced to his father's mind, the unpardonable weakness of having been hurried away by feeling, into admitting the possible truth of a creed totally contrary to reason. He therefore replied, with a slight degree of embarrassment : " That he did not attempt himself any solution of the mystery ; but that Francis had professed to derive strength and consolation from the influence of Christian faith ; and almost with his dying breath he conjured him to request his father, for his sake, to examine thoroughly the evidences on which his creed rested. He seemed to think that his recommendation could have no other weight, but as the last request of a dying son to his father ; in this view, he entertained some hope that it might be granted."

Edgar saw from the change in his father's countenance, that he had struck a chord which vibrated beneath his touch, but this change alone revealed his internal emotion, for he was indeed moved ; even Lord Fitz-Clare could not remember without some compunctious visitings of nature, that the last request of Francis, was almost the first he had ever presumed to make, and that so far from attending to his wants or wishes, he had not thought of them sufficiently to remember he had any. He had disappointed almost his last wish, by delaying to obey his summons, until he had attended to the claims of interest ; and this recollection now caused a bitter, though transient pang of regret. Lord Fitz-Clare did not choose to betray the weakness of repentance, neither was he willing to prolong a conversation which gave rise to such painful emotions, and therefore ended it by saying : " We will talk of this subject at some other time, when your reason is not clouded by the influence of excited feeling ; at present, I feel the absolute necessity of solitude."

" Can the human heart be made of stuff so stern," thought Edgar, as he closed the door, and left Lord Fitz-Clare alone, " and yet, I am sure, a passing pang of conscience smote him at my last words ; and yet, what can regret avail the gentle spirit which now sleeps in breathless clay, or is launched into some dark world unknown ; for, as my father says, have I not yielded to feeling rather than reason, in dreaming that the faith which consoled my poor brother was founded in reality ?" Edgar felt as if under the influence of some evil genius, to whose spells he must surely, though unwillingly yield. He quenched the heavenly light which glimmered within, to guide him in his search after truth and happiness—for are they not the same—and sought to fortify himself with pride and reason, as he proudly termed it ; though never was term more misapplied than reason in this instance, for this term can never be properly used to signify any system of belief which does not consist of legitimate inferences, drawn from true premises. The systems of infidelity are founded rather on reasoning than reason and that the former is not sufficient for the discovery of truth is sufficiently proved by the acuteness and subtlety with which insane persons fortify themselves in their delusions,

by reasonings so ingenious that it would be impossible to convict them of fallacy, for they follow necessarily from the mistaken premises which these unfortunate creatures have adopted.

Lord Fitz-Clare never again beheld Francis ; he refused to see the body, as being unnecessarily painful ; and he evinced no other token of a wish to make reparation, as far as it could be made, to him whom he had so cruelly neglected in life, but in the unusually magnificent preparations which were made for his solemn interment in the family vault. He never made further inquiries of Edgar respecting what had passed in the last hours of Francis, and repressed decidedly any attempt on his part to renew the conversation. Edgar, who was appointed one of the executors of his brother's will, took a melancholy satisfaction in fulfilling the requests it contained. The tenderness and minute consideration for the wants and wishes of others which many of them evinced, were to him new proofs of the goodness and tenderness of his brother's heart. The interest excited in the character of Francis was still further heightened by looking over his private papers—records of feeling known only to himself and his God. Among them was a packet marked "Papers to be burned without reading, as they are chiefly records of feeling, of no further importance to any one." An irresistible desire impelled Edgar to open this packet, and the first passage on which his eyes fell, was as follows :

"Why do I thus grieve over natural deficiencies ? Is not this wicked repining against the decrees of my Heavenly Father ? Yet it is not so much my deficiencies which grieve me, as the contempt they excite in those I could have loved so well. Could they know how fondly my heart often yearns toward them, would they thus have trampled on it ? Yet they shall never know the pain they have inflicted. To-day, I could not resist my desire to say something to Edgar, on the important subject which so much occupies my thoughts. I could not help indulging the hope that he would listen to me at least with patience, and that I might be the means of awaking his attention to truths of such importance to his happiness ; but how cruelly was I mortified at the cold and contemptuous manner in which he replied.

I was effectually silenced before I had time to explain myself, and scarcely remember ever to have experienced bitterer mortification."

What would Edgar have given to recall this past act of unkindness, as he read these words. They presented his own conduct in a light which it was too painful to contemplate, and he hastily closed the papers, and put them carefully aside ; he could not resolve to destroy them, and felt no inclination to examine their contents further at present.

CHAPTER XLVI.

What matters my forgiveness ? an old man's
Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abus'd ; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment ? both
Being weak and worthless ? I have lived too long.

Marino Faliero.

It had been most fortunate for Ellen's restoration to tranquillity, that she had known nothing of the internal struggle it had cost Edgar Clifford to give her up ; nor how frequently her image returned to his mind, bringing with it feelings of the bitterest self-reproach and keenest regret.

She thought that the desires which had been fostered in his heart from infancy, and that had slumbered at Woodbourne beneath the power of other influences, had revived in full strength in the genial atmosphere of the world ; and that in the new pursuits they called forth, the new pleasures they presented, the new ties they formed, his remembrance of her had become dim, and his love so changed, that its very recollection perhaps excited surprise in his own mind.

Whether his marriage with Lady Julia had proceeded from love or policy, it was equally evident that he had voluntarily renounced the vows of faith he had insisted on plighting to her, and that his love for her, even if it existed at the time of his marriage, must have been under the dominion of more powerful feelings, and was doubtless, ere this, effaced from his heart. Yet it was impossible to remember without regret, the depth and tenderness of the affection her heart had lavished upon one who had proved so unworthy of her love ; nor to recall without a pang, those bright visions of hope, which had for a brief season converted the world around her into an enchanted region. The numberless associations, too, which a sensibility so keen, an imagination so fertile as hers, must form with every object which

once strongly interests the heart, or closely occupies the attention, often awakened painful trains of thought, which Ellen sought to banish, for she no longer yielded passively to their suggestions. With a mind so rich in thought, a heart so filled with generous and benevolent affections, she could not fail to find continual sources of interest in the happiness of all around, and above all, in the humble and earnest endeavor to employ all the talents with which God had intrusted her, in his service ; not so much from the thought of the awful account which must be rendered of them, as from the love and gratitude, which glowed within her heart toward her Creator and Redeemer.

Among the many objects that claimed Ellen's attention and care, there was none which more strongly excited her interest, than Olivia Granville, the friend of her earliest days, and rendered doubly dear to her, by the knowledge that the pure and devoted affection of her brother was bestowed upon her.

Mr. Granville's health continued to decline, and his infirmities were so painful and enervating in their effects on his constitution, that he became nearly incapable of active exertion. His natural irritability was so much increased by bodily suffering, and vexation at the state of the country, that these causes, combined with the unpopular side he had taken in politics, had banished from his house most of his acquaintances, and many of those whom he had considered as friends. Though Mr. Granville affected to despise, nay, even to rejoice in this desertion, as he said it was impossible for him to take any pleasure in associating with Whigs, yet inly he felt the mortification of this abandonment most deeply, and painfully missed the little social amusements which were peculiarly adapted to his tastes. He loved to chat an hour or two with a neighbor, and enjoyed a quiet game of backgammon, or a rubber at whist. His pride and liberality had been equally gratified by at once displaying to his neighbors, and sharing with them, the good things of the world which had fallen to his portion.

He felt himself a marked man. Few can sustain such a position with dignity or equanimity, for it requires an elevation of mind and command of temper, which are rarely possessed ; and

it had only the effect on Mr. Granville, of causing him to maintain his opinions with increased violence, and to adhere to them with greater pertinacity. Times such as these, try men ; and Mr. Granville could not help distinguishing the precious from the base metal in this fiery ordeal. Now, that his society was incapable of affording pleasure ; now, that he was shunned by others, he was almost courted by Richard Clifford. He was not to be repulsed by coldness, nor affronted by reflections upon his conduct and opinions, which Mr. Granville in the bitterness of his heart, sometimes threw out ; and with the most considerate delicacy, and unwearied kindness, he sought to beguile the tedious hours of sickness, and taxed his ingenuity and invention in suggesting pleasing trains of reflection, or in discovering sources of gratification, for one who made such ungracious returns for his kindness.

Richard Clifford knew that Mr. Granville's manner was often exactly the reverse of his feelings, and assumed from the pride of maintaining firmness and consistency of character ; and despite his ungraciousness, sometimes discovered unconscious manifestations of emotion, in the softened expression of his eye, in the kindness of his tone, and in acts of attention to his little tastes and habits, which, though Mr. Granville frequently suggested, he always endeavored to give the credit of to Olivia.

Richard Clifford possessed natural gayety of heart, and playfulness of fancy, which had once enabled him to excel in the lighter graces of conversation. The merest trifle was capable of being rendered a source of amusement, by one whose glad heart danced within his bosom in the exuberance of spirits, and whose glowing imagination imparted its radiance to every object. But those days were gone, for Ellen had been to him the life of life, and with her had fled forever his elasticity and joyousness of spirit. From that time other powers of his mind were called into action, and their native strength increased by exercise ; his mind was turned to useful pursuits, and generally employed in serious and important subjects of contemplation. He found relief too in active habits, and it was rarely that he continued any sedentary employment for more than an hour or two. He found

no interest in what is generally termed chatting or gossiping, and especially detested a game of whist.

It was therefore an unusual exertion of patience, and a degree of kindness not easily to be appreciated, which enabled him to devote so many hours to Mr. Granville's amusement, in direct opposition to his own tastes and habits. In these labors of love, Ellen was always an able and willing assistant, and she could not help smiling sometimes with affectionate admiration, at her father's unwonted efforts to retail all the little news of the neighborhood, or to observe the air of interest he assumed during a protracted game of whist. She had never loved him more than at such moments as these.

Captain and Mrs. Herbert sometimes accompanied the Cliffords in their visits to Windsor, and after their return home, Mrs. Herbert often admonished Mr. Clifford that he was acting injudiciously, and even unchristianly, in thus humoring Mr. Granville's weaknesses of character, and in assisting him to waste time, which was the more precious, because it was evidently drawing to a close. Mr. Clifford answered these admonitions with perfect good humor; yet he appeared incorrigible, and Mrs. Herbert was less provoked at the warmth and earnestness with which Ellen vindicated him, than at the provoking smile which hovered around his lips, as he listened to Ellen's defense of his conduct.

But Mr. Clifford was a Christian in the most comprehensive sense of the word, and he was therefore aware that friendship required the performance of more sacred and important duties toward one sinking into the grave, than beguiling the tedious hours of languor and indisposition, or affording transient amusement. Mr. Granville was attached both by education and prejudices to the Church of England; he was a regular observer of its forms, a constant attendant on Mr. Morton's preaching, a despiser of dissenters, and to the claims of charity his hand was always open. His ideas of religion did not extend further than this. Though he professed to believe the creed and all the articles of the Church, it was with him a belief of words not things, for he had never seriously meditated on their import. But the tedious hours of lingering sickness throw us upon our own resources, and

compel the most unreflecting sometimes to meditation. When we feel within us the fearful warnings of our mortality, and the probability daily increasing, that the most awful change which human beings can undergo is rapidly approaching, anxious doubts and fears will arise as to our immortal destiny. Thoughts on such subjects had lately intruded more frequently and more anxiously on Mr. Granville's attention than he cared to own; and when Richard Clifford attempted to lead conversation to the great truths of Christianity, he found him an interested though not a willing auditor.

Mr. Clifford watched for the most favorable opportunities to make the impressions he wished on the mind of his friend, and was careful to avoid all appearance of obtrusiveness, and never to urge his own views too long, or with too much warmth. He knew that Mr. Granville's natural pride and obstinacy of character would lead him to reject a truth at the dictation of another, which he might embrace as the suggestion of his own mind. In these efforts he was aided by Mr. Morton and Ellen, but Mr. Morton was aware that Mr. Granville regarded religion as his vocation, and a good clergyman as having nothing in common with other men, and therefore thought Mr. Clifford's attempts to excite and interest Mr. Granville's mind on religious subjects, were much more likely to be attended with success than his own.

Mr. Granville had too much generosity of temper to be unmoved by Richard Clifford's unwearied kindness, and disinterested friendship. There was so much natural openness about Richard Clifford, that one could as soon doubt the reality of sunshine, when they saw the light and felt the warmth of its rays, as they could doubt the sincerity of his kindness. Mr. Granville was constrained to forgive him for being a Whig, though this circumstance was a source of regret, and often of temporary vexation to him. He had always found it impossible to entertain a shadow of resentment toward Ellen, even when he had felt most disposed to quarrel with the rest of the family, and now she was dearer to him than ever, for Olivia herself could not be more attentive to his wants and wishes than Ellen.

When the colonies had first declared independence, Mr. Granville had indignantly resolved to leave the land of rebels and return to England, whatever discomfort, or injury of fortune such a step might involve ; but a long and violent attack of illness had so enfeebled his frame, that his physician thought the fatigue and agitation which must necessarily attend such a removal, would put a speedy termination to his existence. In the first fervor of his wrath, he would willingly have fallen a martyr to the cause he had espoused, to prove to all the world his detestation of the unnatural rebellion of the colonies ; but time and suffering abated the ardor of his first impressions, and though he inwardly accused himself of weakness, in abandoning the high ground he had taken, and yielding the point, he endeavored to put the best face he could upon the matter, and to maintain his own consistency, by declaring that he had abandoned his intention in pity to the prayers and entreaties of Olivia. As he could not look forward to living long, he would not carry her against her will to a land of strangers, where he must soon leave her desolate and miserable.

This consideration, it is true, had operated more powerfully than any other upon Mr. Granville to induce him to remain in Virginia ; and Olivia never failed, in speaking of the subject, to ascribe it entirely to this cause, and expressed her warmest gratitude. No allusion was ever made by Ellen or Mr. Clifford to the state of the country, or to political affairs, and William Clifford's name was never mentioned. The last omission was often very vexatious to Mr. Granville ; though he did not know how to intimate the strong and affectionate interest he really felt in William, lest the degree of disapprobation he had always expressed of his cause, should appear to be in some measure lessened. Mr. Granville at length grew weary of making bitter reflections which no one replied to, and somewhat ashamed also of his own ungraciousness toward friends, from whom he was daily experiencing acts of kindness, and gratifying demonstrations of affection.

In proportion as his health became weaker, and his mind was more drawn toward subjects relating to another state of existence,

the importance of all temporary interests seemed to lessen ; and even when he endeavored to recall them, or to excite his own prejudices in the good cause, as he always termed the Tory side, he found their power over him greatly lessened.

Olivia perceived this change with the utmost pleasure, though she had too much womanly tact ever to permit Mr. Granville to know that she had observed any alteration in his sentiments. The Cliffords she had always thought she loved with all the warmth of which her heart was capable, but she found it was impossible to limit the degree of affection of which the human heart is susceptible ; for she felt that William Clifford's father and sister were dearer to her than ever, because when with them, she felt as if she was not wholly separated from him. But if they were all endeared to her by the relation in which they stood to William Clifford, Ellen was doubly so ; for her exquisite sensibility and delicacy of observation, imparted that sort of character to her sympathy, which enabled her to enter, as it were, into the hearts of those she loved. If there was any intelligence relating to her brother, which Ellen knew would be gratifying to Olivia, it was always incidentally mentioned in their conversations, with such an air of simplicity and kindness, that it was impossible the delicacy of her friend could be alarmed, or her pride wounded by the communication.

Mr. Granville's health had lately sunk so rapidly, as to excite in a strong degree the apprehensions of his friends ; and Olivia though not aware of the extent of his danger, found it utterly impossible to conceal from him the anxiety and distress, which his increased weakness and suffering occasioned her. But Ellen was always near to supply her place, and her gentle ministrations were always grateful to Mr. Granville. He said, she knew exactly when to be silent and when to talk—when to persuade him, and when to let him alone. Indeed Ellen was the kindest and most watchful of nurses ; and when in a sick room, seemed so wholly absorbed in the welfare of the patient, that the sufferer could not help feeling as if she had an equal and common interest in all that concerned him.

After a day of unusual suffering, Mr. Granville had fallen

asleep, and Ellen persuaded Olivia to lie down and rest herself, while she watched by his bedside. He slept so sweetly and profoundly, that Ellen, after drawing aside the window curtain, and partially admitting the rays of the setting sun, took William's last letter from her bosom, and began a careful re-perusal of it, for the twentieth time at least. For some minutes she was absorbed in this interesting occupation, for though she could have repeated every word in the letter, still she loved to read them traced by William's hand; his writing seemed a part of himself, still present with her, when she looked hastily around, at a slight rustling noise, and started at seeing Mr. Granville's eyes fixed earnestly upon her.

She colored deeply, for she was afraid he might ask her questions, which might produce unpleasant or agitating reflections respecting her brother, and hastily folding up the letter, put it aside.

"What were you reading, my dear," said Mr. Granville; "and why did you put it up in such a hurry?"

Ellen colored more deeply than before; but as she knew evasion is always irritating to invalids, and was particularly so to Mr. Granville, she replied immediately, "I was reading an old letter from William."

"And what does he say? It is a long time since I have heard any thing about him, I hope he is well; I can not say I hope he is happy."

A flush of glad surprise lighted up Ellen's countenance, and her dark eye sparkled with delight, at the kind tone with which these inquiries were made. It was long since Mr. Granville had mentioned William's name. "If you will permit me—if it will interest you," said Ellen, "I will read a portion of his letter to you."

"Yes, yes, read it, child; I should like to hear what he says."

The letter commenced with a few lines on the state of his health, in obedience he said, to the promise exacted by Ellen. He acknowledged that it was at present weak, but treated it lightly, as produced from a wound, of which he said he was

rapidly recovering. His description of the state of the army, his expressions of patriotic feeling, Ellen omitted, and passed over to his inquiries concerning his friends. His inquiries respecting Mr. Granville were most affectionately and respectfully expressed, and so minute as to evince the real interest he felt in his sufferings; and in conclusion he desired the most affectionate remembrances to Mr. Granville, if Ellen did not think they would be wholly unacceptable, and asked if he ever evinced any interest in his fate.

It was evident that Mr. Granville listened with the deepest interest to the contents of the letter, and at the passage relating to himself he was visibly affected. He murmured, as Ellen read, "A thousand pities, such a heart should have been so misguided." When Ellen had concluded the letter, he observed: "William has a noble heart. When you write to him, return my love, and tell him that even now, when I have so many awful and distressing subjects of thought, it grieves me to think of the part he has chosen; but I forgive him."

"If you could know," said Ellen, "what it has cost William to incur your displeasure; if you fully understood the sacrifices he has made to a high and strong sense of duty, however misguided you might deem his principles, you would not only forgive him, but even admire and love him for the very course which has excited your disapprobation."

Mr. Granville sighed deeply. It was evident to Ellen's observant eye, that he was hesitating whether to give utterance to the thoughts which oppressed his heart, and after a silence of some minutes had elapsed, he said: "You judge of my feelings, Ellen, toward your brother, by what you know they once were, but you know not how differently things appear, after having been cut off for months from the active pursuits and business of life, and stretched on a bed of sickness, of suffering, perhaps of death;" and here he looked steadfastly at Ellen, who cast down her eyes, for she could not bear his glance of mournful and earnest inquiry.

He resumed: "I certainly regret and disapprove the course William has taken, though I am sure that he is actuated by the purest motives; but all earthly resentments and passions grow

dim and vanishing, as the awful and boundless prospect of eternity opens before me. One only source of earthly interest seems to continue, stronger than life, the anxious thought of what the future fate of my poor Olivia will be, when I am gone. There was a time when the memory of her father would have given her an additional claim to the kindness of all around, but that day is past, and it would now only excite odium."

"Oh no, my dear Mr. Granville," said Ellen, with affectionate warmth; "you must not think so meanly of poor human nature, as to suppose that a mere difference of opinion and feeling, could so entirely eradicate all the kindly feelings produced by the acquaintance of years, and experience of the friendly, generous, and honorable conduct for which you have always been distinguished. Excuse me," she added, slightly coloring at the warmth of her own panegyric; "you know I do not flatter."

"No, my child," said Mr. Granville, with a faint smile, "I know you utter the thoughts, warm as they rise in the kindest and sincerest of hearts. But you do not know men as well as I do."

Ellen fixed her eyes wistfully yet timidly on Mr. Granville's face, as if longing yet fearing to speak.

"Speak out freely, Ellen, whatever is on your heart," said Mr. Granville, replying to a look more eloquent than words.

The color alternately deepened and faded on Ellen's cheek, as she replied: "Is not Olivia dear to us as a sister, and to our father as his own child? If she should ever need protection, why may not the same roof shelter us? And I pledge to you my solemn promise, to regard her welfare as more precious than my own; and if the fortunes of war should be unfavorable to the American cause, my father and brother would pledge their honor, that her safety should be first cared for. And this event alone should separate me from Olivia, for should the hour of danger or disgrace come, my place would be at the side of my father and brother."

She paused. Mr. Granville averted his face to hide the tears which filled his eyes, and Ellen continued: "My father has long wished to mention this subject to you, yet feared to do so. I

hope it will be long before any such arrangement is necessary ; but, in the meantime, if you could reconcile yourself to this plan, it might have the happy effect of quieting the anxieties and apprehensions that prey upon your heart."

"My heart thanks you, though my words can not. However ungracious I may have appeared, I have long appreciated fully the kindness and generosity with which your family, especially your father and yourself, have treated me always ; but particularly now, when all others forsake me. To leave Olivia in the care of such friends, would lessen the bitterness of death ; yet there are some very serious obstacles in the way of such a plan, nor do I see how I could overcome them with any regard to consistency of character."

"Let us not, my dear friend," said Ellen, "think of man's judgment, man's wavering unjust judgment, on a subject which may involve so much happiness or misery. In the eye of God, your first earthly duty is to provide for the happiness and welfare of your child ; to adopt any plan which will best promote this, provided it does not require any sacrifice of principle on your part. And after all, this is but a phantom, which your too strict sense of what men call honor, has conjured up. Even according to their own rules of judgment, no man would condemn a father, for not compelling a daughter to sacrifice her affections to his political views."

Ellen was aware that she could urge a conversation on subjects so delicate as these, much more closely than her father durst venture to do, without fear of giving offense, for men always converse with better temper on matters concerning differences of political opinion with women, than with men ; for all that relates to morals or feeling, they consider as peculiarly belonging to the province of women, and their pride of opinion is less roused—the sense of rivalry less excited, in discussions of such subjects with them. This consideration had determined her to open the conversation on this subject herself with Mr. Granville, as soon as she could find an opportunity of doing so, rather than to intrust it to her father, who she knew had long wished to make this proposal to Mr. Granville.

"There is certainly much truth in what you say, Ellen, yet I acknowledge that it would gratify me to know that no act of mine could ever cause any one to doubt my fidelity to my King or country. Yet this consideration is not so strong as my regard for Olivia's happiness; there are other and even more serious obstacles to her becoming an inmate of your family."

"Let us then understand each other clearly," said Ellen, and she was surprised at the courage with which her own earnestness inspired her. "Why should there be any reserve or concealment between us, when we are considering the happiness of those so dear to us? I know that you are acquainted with my brother's feelings toward Olivia, for he told me that he had never confided them to any other human being, but to you and myself; but surely, as he is no longer an inmate of our roof, this could be no objection to her residing with us. Indeed, if you understood William's heart as well as I do, you would know that he might err from an excess, but never from a deficiency in generosity. Deeply, truly, as he loves Olivia, the most positive proofs of reciprocal affection, would not induce him to permit her to share danger or disgrace with him."

"I will acknowledge," said Mr. Granville, "that the time has been, when I would have preferred William Clifford as a son-in-law to any person in Europe; nor can I deny that my heart still clings to him, in spite of his obstinate infatuation. I know that he is noble and disinterested—in this he is your own brother, Ellen; but all his fine traits of character, would make a residence in the bosom of his family more dangerous to Olivia. I speak to you as a dying man, Ellen, and as I would to my own daughter. I do not know what Olivia's sentiments are respecting your brother. I have feared to know them, since I considered such an attachment as hopeless, but should her affections be engaged, would it not be exposing her to needless misery, to place her in a situation where every thing would serve to remind her of him?"

"Certainly," said Ellen, "if it must be hopeless; but consider well, my dear Mr. Granville, before you pronounce the sentence of doom on the tenderest and most cherished hopes of such hearts as William's and Olivia's. Think better of it. Agree to leave

the matter to themselves, and the sternest politician would not accuse you of inconsistency. On the contrary, to force Olivia to act in an affair where her happiness is so deeply concerned, in conformity to abstract political principles, which perhaps scarcely ever occupied her attention for an hour, would be tyranny; and your own heart would rebel against the dictates of a too scrupulous sense of what you consider honor."

Mr. Granville seemed absorbed for some minutes in profound meditation, and Ellen could see by the working of his features, the conflict of his heart. At last, he said: "There is certainly much force in what you say; but though on all points relating to moral conduct, there is no person upon earth on whose judgment I could more securely rely upon than yours, yet the code of honor can not be thoroughly understood by any woman; many of its laws must be felt rather than reasoned upon."

"I know of no law by which we are bound to regulate our conduct or opinions, but the law of God; and this, I believe, comprehends even the nicest points of true honor," replied Ellen; "but I will not now argue this matter. Will you not admit my father to be a nice judge of man's code of honor?"

"Yes, certainly. I have never known a more honorable gentleman than your father."

"Then," said Ellen, "the case is judged. It was only yesterday we were speaking of poor Miss Weston, who, you know, has been so long and so truly attached to Arthur Seldon. Her father, to maintain his own consistency, in his last illness, made her promise that no circumstances should ever induce her to marry Arthur, because he had entered the United States army. He exacted, likewise, a promise from her, to desert all her old friends and acquaintances, leave the land of her birth, and seek the protection of some of his friends in New York, who entertained the same political views with himself. The poor girl loved him too tenderly, to refuse any request in her power to grant, under such circumstances; but in complying with it, her heart seems almost broken. I have never read more touching expressions of misery, than those contained in a letter from her to Mary Lesley, which she received a few days ago. My father and I were speaking of

these circumstances yesterday, and he deplored deeply that a false sense of honor should have induced Mr. Weston to make so cruel a request of his daughter, and expressed the utmost surprise that he should have supposed honor required it. This sacrifice of his daughter's happiness, moreover, he said, was doubtless made to secure the applause of mankind ; but he himself believed it would have the contrary effect of exciting general disapprobation."

"Indeed," said Mr. Granville, "is this your father's opinion?" Ellen thought he seemed relieved rather than offended at the implied censure of his own sentiments. She thought he was seeking to obtain absolution from his conscience, for acting in conformity to the dictates of natural affection, rather than the dogmas of prejudice, which he had been accustomed to call principle ; nor was she mistaken in her judgment. "But," added he, after a pause, "suppose the case had been reversed, had Arthur Seldon been a Tory, and Mr. Weston a Whig, would your father have disapproved so strongly of Mr. Weston's conduct?"

"Certainly," said Ellen, "you know my father has that sort of justice and sympathy for others, which enables him to make their situations his own, even when persons are most opposed to him in feeling and principle. You have seen him tried ; did you ever perceive that his sense of honor was less nice for friends that differed most from him, than for those who entertained similar views?"

"No," replied Mr. Granville, after a moment's consideration. "I must do him the justice to say, that I believe he would be as mindful of the honor of a friend as of his own, however opposed his friend's opinions might be to his own ; and, in the course of a long life, your father is the only man with warm feelings and actively engaged in the business of life, of whom I could say this much. But I can not decide immediately upon an affair of so much importance as that on which we have been conversing ; you must give me time to weigh it well."

"Surely," said Ellen ; and her heart beat high with hope, for she had the most favorable anticipations as to the nature of Mr. Granville's decision from his countenance and manner. A few

months ago, she knew he would not have listened for a moment to such a proposal as she had then ventured to make ; but she had watched the gradual softening of his heart, and fading of his prejudices, when the emotions of natural affection were more strongly called forth, as the time seemed to approach more nearly for the dissolution of all earthly ties ; and his sense of the awful realities of eternity became more vivid, as the things of time seemed rapidly receding ; and she was rather gratified than surprised at the result of their conversation.

" We have already conversed too long upon so agitating a subject," said Ellen, as she observed the tremulous motion of Mr. Granville's hand. " Will you let me give you a few of those restorative drops, which Dr. Norton directed should be taken, when you required something to compose your nerves ?"

" Thank you, my dear," said Mr. Granville, taking the cup from her hand, and looking at her with a glance of such expressive gratitude, that Ellen was obliged to avert her face to conceal the tears which filled her eyes. Nothing is more affecting to a generous heart, than to see a proud and stern spirit brought low ; to see those whose very looks were once commands, reduced to be thankful for the smallest favors ; the humiliation of sickness, the faltering accent, the trembling hand, proceeding from unstrung nerves, which the stern will has no more power to control, are inexpressibly touching to witness in those whose pride has hitherto made them sufficient for themselves in every situation of life.

After a silence of a few minutes, Mr. Granville said : " I think your singing, Ellen, would have a happier effect in composing my nerves—for I am brought at last to acknowledge that I have nerves—than these drops."

" What shall I sing ?" asked Ellen.

" The hymn you sung for Mr. Morton yesterday evening, I thought sounded very sweetly," and a slight flush of shame passed over Mr. Granville's pale cheek, as he made a request so unusual.

Ellen did not give the slightest intimation of the surprise she really felt, for it was the first time Mr. Granville had ever asked

her to sing a hymn. The sweet, clear tones of Ellen's voice, as they rose in a hymn of praise, seemed to waft the souls of her hearers to Heaven. Ellen's singing was the voice of feeling ; her auditors forgot to observe or to criticise, they could only feel the peculiar emotion her singing expressed.

R*

CHAPTER XLVII.

Leave me, oh ! leave me !—unto all below
Thy presence binds me with too deep a spell ;
Thou mak'st those mortal regions whence I go
Too mighty in their loveliness—farewell,
That I may part in peace.

MRS. HEMANS.

MR. GRANVILLE did not survive many days, after the conversation with Ellen, related in the preceding chapter ; but before his decease, he expressed to her his determination to accede to the proposal she had made with regard to Olivia. He said, too, after mature consideration, he had determined to regard nothing but Olivia's happiness, in all that related to her own destiny, and if this would be best promoted by a marriage with William Clifford, his last blessing should attend them both ; but that if such an union should ever take place, he hoped no daughter of his would ever pursue the selfish and ungenerous plan, of delaying to unite her fate with that of a man she loved, until she could be sure that fortune would smile upon him.

A few days before his death, he communicated briefly to Olivia, the conversation which had taken place between William Clifford and himself during their last interview ; for since his own views had been changed, he deemed it necessary that Olivia should understand thoroughly the motives which had induced William Clifford to act toward her with apparent inconsistency and unkindness. At any moment less solemn and afflicting, such a communication as this would have imparted to Olivia emotions of the most exquisite delight, not only as removing every shadow of blame from a character which she loved to consider as a standard of perfection, but as placing it even in a brighter light than it had before appeared, and also increasing her self-estimation by the elevating consciousness, that her affection, so

far from being unrequited, had been long returned by the warmest love.

Mr. Granville watched the sudden flush of joy which overspread Olivia's countenance, and the light which beamed from her eye; and if any doubt remained on his mind, these uncontrollable evidences of emotion, assured him of the state of his daughter's heart. But the bright bloom soon changed to paleness, and the lustre of her eyes was dimmed with tears, as he spoke of the certainty of his decease, and was proceeding to acquaint her with his permission that she should accept Mr. Clifford's invitation of residing at Woodbourne, when Olivia's distress became so overwhelming, that he was compelled to desist, for there was nothing he dreaded so much, as awakening the emotions of his own heart, in their full strength. He had thought his holds on life were loosening, but he felt that he clung more closely to them, when he witnessed the agony of Olivia, and wished again to live, were it only for her sake.

"Go, my child," he said in a faltering voice, "send Ellen to me; at another time, she will tell you all I wish you to know. You can not love her too much, you can not trust her too entirely."

Olivia obeyed in silence, she dared not trust herself to utter a word, convulsive sobs agitated her frame with a violence that terrified her, as she dreaded the influence her grief might have upon her father. What would she have given at this moment, to possess the self-control, which enabled Ellen to take her seat in stillness by Mr. Granville's bedside, to watch every glance and anticipate his wishes, to catch the lowest and most faltering accents of his voice, and to whisper words of consolation to a spirit hovering and trembling on the confines of eternity. But such powers can be attained only by years of discipline, and by the assistance of God's grace; for there is something in the awful hour of separation from those we love, which is too much for feeble nature to witness and sustain its firmness, unless aided by divine principle.

From this period Mr. Granville spoke no more upon any subject of earthly interest. Whenever his mind was sufficiently

collected to think upon any subject, it seemed to dwell with mingled fear and hope upon eternal things. At such hours as these, Christian friendship is an invaluable privilege, and Mr. Granville found tranquillity and consolation in the untiring attentions of Mr. Morton and his old friend Mr. Clifford; Ellen, above all, was always ready to interpret every look, and to offer every soothing attention before his wishes could form themselves into words. Few parents, so tenderly attached as Mr. Clifford was to his daughter, would have permitted her to continue a degree of watchfulness and constant attention, which seemed too much for a frame so delicate. But Mr. Clifford was one of those, who are not only unwearied in their own efforts for others, but from a very peculiar generosity of disposition, was actuated by the same spirit of disinterestedness with regard to those who were dearer to him than himself. He really esteemed it one of the first of privileges to be able to administer assistance or consolation to his friends; and he not only considered it perfectly natural that his children should be influenced by the same feelings, but he loved to see that they were so.

He would cheerfully have taken the whole task of nursing upon himself, but he knew there were gentle offices of kindness best rendered by a woman's hand, and he saw that Mr. Granville evidently preferred Ellen's attendance to that of any one else. The sight of his daughter appeared to agitate him, and as she passed before him, he would sometimes cover his eyes with his hand, as if to shut out a sight which his weakness could not bear. Olivia too, felt herself unable to continue, with apparent calmness, for more than a few minutes together in his room; for since his death was so visibly and rapidly approaching, she had no longer the strength of hope to sustain her. Sophia was unskillful as a nurse, as she was not only deficient in the mechanical knowledge necessary, but her habits of mind peculiarly unfitted her for the duties of such an office.

Mrs. Herbert was always very active in times of sickness or affliction, but Captain Herbert was at present confined to his room by a severe attack of rheumatism, which made her attentions necessary to him. While expressing his regret to Ellen for

the cause of her ~~detection~~, Mr. Clifford could not forbear intimating his satisfaction at the circumstance, as he knew no power upon earth could have prevented Mrs. Herbert from endeavoring to impress her whole system of divinity upon the mind of Mr. Granville, without regard to the weakness of her patient, or his peculiar state of mind.

Mr. Granville, exhausted by previous suffering, expired, gently and almost without a struggle, in Richard Clifford's arms. He died with composure, with hope, though not with the triumph of assured faith; and almost his last words were, to request Ellen to come to his bedside, and repeat to him some of the promises of the Gospel to the penitent. His lips moved as if in prayer, and he died with an expression of peace and serenity on his countenance, which filled the hearts of Ellen and Mr. Clifford with thankfulness; for as they maintained their awful watch by the bed of death, all earthly feeling seemed absorbed in the solemn and vivid realities of eternity.

After the funeral solemnities were over, Mr. Clifford and Ellen insisted on removing Olivia to Woodbourne. Olivia gratefully consented, and it was a satisfaction to her to think that this step was in compliance with the wishes of her departed father. Indeed, in the heart-breaking desolation which she experienced, as the cruel reality was forced upon her, that she was forever separated from him by whom she had been regarded as the dearest and most cherished object, and to whose happiness she had been necessary, her existence seemed without aim or object; and she felt as if the Cliffords were her only remaining bonds on earth; with them only could she have borne to live.

And if she had loved them during her days of sunshine and prosperity, how doubly dear had Mr. Clifford and Ellen become in the dark days of trial, during which they had sustained her; and what was far more endearing, had cheered the dying hours of her father with hopes of heavenly consolation. Olivia had always entertained the utmost respect for religion, and her conduct was greatly influenced by its precepts, though it had never entered so deeply into her heart, as to become a part of her nature. The scenes through which she had passed had, how-

ever, impressed her mind and heart deeply, and her thoughts and feelings were now engaged with the deepest interest, on all that related to her immortal nature. Such subjects were now so strongly connected with the memory of her father, that she felt, while meditating upon them, as if her spirit held communion with his.

All her emotions, her thoughts, were poured into Ellen's sympathizing heart, and in Ellen's presence she found the greatest consolation; for it always inspired the delightful consciousness that she was with a friend who felt for her, and understood her, and with her she no longer experienced that sense of loneliness, which at other times oppressed her heart.

Sophia, too, treated Olivia with sisterly kindness, but her disposition was naturally so gay and buoyant, that she could not confine her attention to such subjects as could interest Olivia in her present state of mind, nor could she prevent the natural exuberance of her spirits from grating harshly and discordantly sometimes on the wounded spirit of Olivia. She had never learned to enter so deeply into the feelings of her friends as to make them her own; and, besides, she was very much absorbed at that time by the interesting state of her own affairs.

A change had taken place, some months previously to this time, in the neighborhood, by a circumstance, which caused a strong sensation in a community in which there was so little of the stir and novelty of life. Mr. Arlington, a young gentleman from New York, had inherited a large estate, situated near Woodbourne, by the death of an uncle, and had removed thither, with his mother and sisters. New settlers of any description in so retired a neighborhood, could scarcely have failed to cause an unusual degree of interest and excitement; but the arrival of the Arlingtons caused quite a new era in society. They were gay, hospitable, and, having brought with them the manners and customs of city life, they at once conciliated good-will, and inspired that sort of respect, which is so naturally felt by people of retired habits and simple manners, for those who are acquainted with the usages of society, a cabalistic phrase, the power of whose charm is proportioned to the vagueness of the idea it conveys.

The advantages of agreeable manners, prepossessing exterior, and the charm of novelty, made Mr. Arlington a welcome guest every where ; the Arlingtons were completely the lions of the day, and their sayings and doings excited great and universal interest.

They received and reciprocated all the attentions which were lavished upon them with gay good-will, but a decided partiality for the inmates of Woodbourne soon became evident in their conduct. Sophia had never before met with people who suited her natural tastes so exactly, and her thoughts soon became almost entirely engrossed by the Arlingtons. The mother was delightful, the sisters were charming, but in her secret soul she placed Frederic Arlington far above them all. The state of Sophia's heart soon became so apparent to Ellen, that she feared it was evident to every one else ; but her anxiety lest her sister's love should be unrequited, was speedily removed, by very unequivocal demonstrations of preference on the part of Mr. Arlington. She did not entertain the slightest doubt that Sophia would accept his proposals as soon as they were made, without the slightest hesitation ; for when she had attempted to urge the necessity of caution and deliberation in settling the most important affair of life, Sophia had resented this advice as cold and unfeeling, and proceeding from Ellen's want of sympathy. Caution and deliberation were odious words, and should never find admission into her vocabulary, in cases where the decisions of the heart alone should be listened to ; indeed, she intimated plainly to Ellen, that on a subject such as this, advice and remonstrance would be unnecessary and unavailing.

Ellen could not help remembering the past, though she forbore to remind Sophia by word or look, of the lectures, remonstrances, and reproaches she had once addressed to her upon a similar subject ; and Sophia did not appear to retain the faintest recollection that she had ever thought or acted under the influence of different views and feelings from those which at present influenced her. Ellen determined now to cultivate Mr. Arlington's acquaintance carefully, and to study his character closely, for she looked upon him as a future brother. She found her task an easy one, for Frederic Arlington met her advances with

such open-hearted warmth, that weeks did the work of months in ordinary cases, in producing cordiality and affection ; and as for his character, he that ran might read it, for there were none of those paradoxes to be discovered in it, which arise from the conflict of strong and opposing feelings, nor that depth of thought which proceeds from the power and habit of self-reflection. Yet there was so much gayety, sincerity, kindness, and generosity in his character, that Ellen soon felt, while she regretted the want of elevation and depth in his mind and feelings, that she could love him as a brother, though she could not have conceived the possibility of falling in love with him.

Sophia saw in Frederic Arlington the realization of her ideal ; she perceived no deficiencies in him, and would have wished him to be nothing that he was not, except, perhaps, a little taller, and even in this respect, she was beginning to doubt whether she had not been mistaken in thinking William Clifford's height the model for manly beauty ; if there was more of majesty, there was, perhaps, less of elegance in such lofty statures. She lived in the happiness of the present moment, and thought of the future with all the careless short-sightedness of childhood, and became so entirely engrossed with the Arlingtons, and their concerns, that her own family and former friends, seemed to sink into comparative insignificance. Two years ago, and Ellen would have been deeply mortified to observe of how very little consequence her tastes, her feelings, her society were, in comparison with those of Laura or Catharine Arlington ; but these two years had been replete with lessons as instructive, as purifying to Ellen's heart, as they were painful—and how painful they were, Ellen could never forget. She submitted now to her present subordinate station in Sophia's thoughts and affections, with so good a grace, that no one could have suspected that she perceived the real state of the case. But though Ellen found she could vanquish all mortification at her own eclipse, she could not help feeling some disturbance, and even vexation, that Mr. Clifford, though the most unexacting and unsuspecting of parents, was sometimes obviously hurt at the entire engrossment of Sophia's thoughts with the Arlingtons, and her own happiness and

prospects ; nor could her utmost address ward off from Sophia some severe reproofs from Mrs. Herbert, on the state of her mind and heart.

These reproofs were very ungraciously received by Sophia, whose natural impatience of every thing like censure, was greatly increased by her present position. She viewed her own character in the light in which she knew she appeared to Arlington, and consequently, she had never before been so lovely or faultless in her own eyes as at present. This effect produced on most persons by love, perhaps more than half explains its magic power, though one naturally shrinks from the analysis of what we love to consider a mysterious charm, with something of the same sensation of impatience and disappointment, with which we listen to the rational explanation of a ghost story.

Mr. Arlington, like Sophia, was little prone to be afflicted by doubts or misgivings of any kind, upon any subject in which he was interested ; his hopes always greatly predominated over his fears, and without fear or hesitation he frankly offered his hand to Sophia, and it was as frankly accepted. Mr. Clifford could not refuse his sanction, though he thought the engagement premature, and insisted that some months should elapse previous to their marriage, to give the parties better opportunities of becoming acquainted with each other. He was firm on this point, notwithstanding Mr. Arlington's remonstrances and entreaties, and it was just at the expiration of the appointed time of delay when Mr. Granville's death took place. Not even the solemnities of death could throw more than a passing cloud over the glad sunshine of Sophia's heart, which danced in her bosom with the joy of the present, and still brighter anticipations of the future ; yet she had too much kindness of feeling to wish to mingle her wedding festivities with the bitter tears of Olivia's first days of mourning for the dead ; and she willingly acquiesced in Mr. Clifford's proposal that the marriage should be again postponed for two or three months.

As to a mere humdrum wedding, that was not to be thought of. Laura and Catharine would be so disappointed ; and Arlington, Sophia said, she knew would scarcely consider himself as

married, if no outward token of joy celebrated their nuptials. Sophia cheerfully made this sacrifice to friendship, and she would fain have constrained her feelings into some unison with Olivia's, especially when she caught the glance of her tearful eye, or heard the sighs which she often breathed unconsciously. At such moments, a temporary sadness would sometimes obscure the brightness of Sophia's day dreams, and she would feel a pang of self-reproach for her own happiness. But in vain, on such occasions, did she attempt to conjure up the most gloomy images to endeavor to solemnize her mind—the damp, cold grave, the agonies of death, the final separation in this world from all we have loved, and all that could be most effectual in saddening the heart, and appalling the imagination. Her light and sportive mind, whose associations were awakened by all the familiar and trivial things of daily life, and which was wont to roam, like the butterfly from flower to flower, in quest of all that was gayest and fairest, could not long be chained down to themes of meditation so uncongenial, and the assumed look of gravity, was soon chased away by the glad laugh which seemed to ring forth its peals from her heart.

Mr. Arlington had left a numerous circle of friends in New York, some of whom had visited him, since his removal to Virginia. Among those guests, there was one, who had particularly excited not only the admiration but the interest of the neighborhood, and especially of the inmates of Woodbourne—Gerald Livingstone. It was true, he possessed intrinsic claims to admiration and interest; but with Ellen and Mr. Clifford the most striking of his merits, was the friendship which existed between William Clifford and himself. They had served many months together in the same regiment, and the circumstances in which they were placed, the same toils, the same dangers, the same lofty feelings of patriotism, the same noble disregard of selfish considerations, had knit their hearts together. The consequences of a severe wound compelled Gerald Livingstone, a few months previous to the time of which we are now writing, to quit the service, at least until his health should be in some degree restored. The time of his convalescence he consented to

spend with Frederic Arlington, who was his cousin-german, and with whom he had been educated in habits of brotherly intimacy ; and a sincere affection had always subsisted between them, though their characters were the very antipodes of each other.

In Old Virginia, the very name of stranger, in those days, was a claim upon the warm-hearted inhabitants which was seldom disputed ; and if their unsuspecting confidence and generosity sometimes exposed them to imposition or to ridicule from unworthy guests, on the other hand, it often brought its own reward by the delightful exercise of kindly and social feeling, and by awakening lasting sentiments of gratitude and generosity, in those who enjoyed their kindness and hospitality. Gerald Livingstone was received throughout the neighborhood with the greatest kindness and attention, but at Woodbourne he seemed to take his place at once, rather as a member of the family, than as a stranger. William Clifford had recommended him in the strongest terms to the kindness and attention of his family ; and without attempting to delineate his character at full length, gave a few striking traits of his courage, his generosity, his nobleness and tenderness of feeling, which he knew could not fail to produce the most favorable prepossessions on the minds of Ellen and his father.

Woodbourne soon became as attractive to Gerald Livingstone as to Frederic Arlington. He liked to talk badinage with Sophia, to discuss with Mr. Clifford the grave subjects in which his heart and mind were interested ; but above all, he **delighted** in listening to the very tones of Ellen's voice ; in reading **the varying** expression of her lovely countenance ; and most of all, in the delightful exercise of thought and feeling, to which Ellen's conversation, replete with originality, moral elevation, and unaffected sensibility, gave rise in his own mind and heart. The kindling cheek and beaming eye with which Ellen listened to Gerald when he uttered sentiments congenial to her own, or which reminded her of her brother ; the interest with which she hung on his narratives, particularly if the name of William Clifford was introduced into them, afforded the most unequivocal and flattering proofs of the interest he had excited ; nor could he be accused of vanity, if

they raised hopes in his bosom as delightful as they were doomed to be delusive. Not even a passing suspicion of the warmth and depth of the sentiments she had excited in Gerald Livingstone's heart ever occurred to Ellen's mind ; for there was no corresponding feeling in her own breast, which enabled her to read those of her lover, and she had no vanity to quicken her observation, or stimulate her to discoveries on such subjects.

Ellen entertained sentiments not only of respect and admiration for Gerald Livingstone, but sincere friendship, which so far from endeavoring to conceal, she manifested with the utmost frankness. Indeed such was the confiding simplicity and kindness of her manner, that Gerald Livingstone could not have failed to interpret them rightly, but from the delicacy and sensibility which characterized all the manifestations of her feelings with a peculiar softness, which he hoped had its origin in a sentiment dearer and tenderer than friendship. He felt himself every day more incapable of reading Ellen's heart, as his own became more interested, and hopes and fears were continually succeeding each other, excited by causes equally trivial and groundless. He did not hesitate to declare his sentiments from the fear of mortification in meeting a refusal. He would always have felt it a cause rather of pride than of wounded vanity to love such a being as Ellen Clifford, even though that love was unreturned ; but he feared to awaken from a delightful dream to a cold and desolate reality. If his hopes should prove delusive, he felt that for him the charm of life had fled.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

But do not think that I can bid
My first and dearest dream depart ;
Oh ! love has only left my lip
To sink the deeper in my heart.

L. E. L.

SEVERAL weeks had now elapsed since the death of Mr. Granville, and Olivia who perfectly understood the state of Sophia's feelings, would not consent to be any longer an obstacle to the completion of her happiness. She insisted on spending a few weeks at the Parsonage with Miss Morton, where she knew she would be entirely removed from all sight and hearing of festivities which were so little in unison with the state of her heart, and where she would still be near enough to Ellen to see and hear from her frequently ; for her intercourse with Ellen was now the sweetest balm of her life. She knew that she understood her and sympathized with her, even upon subjects on which they had not yet ventured to speak.

Ellen's hands, her eyes, above all, her thoughts, were now in constant requisition in Sophia's service. A thousand things were to be arranged, re-arranged, as to the bridal decorations, and the preparation for, and ordering of the entertainment. Ellen listened with unwearied patience, suggested, advised, and entered with gravity into discussions on matters that appeared to her entirely unimportant and uninteresting, but as they afforded pleasure to Sophia ; yet her heart often sank at the idea of the approaching separation from a sister with whom she had ate, slept, and walked together, from the earliest dawn of recollection, and whose happiness had appeared to her, since the death of her mother, a sacred trust confided to her. Ellen's words were cheerful, for she did not wish to cloud Sophia's gladness ; and an involuntary sigh, or momentary expression of sadness, which sometimes

shadowed her face, alone revealed her emotions. Sophia congratulated herself upon the cheerfulness and composure with which Ellen bore their approaching separation ; indeed, she said, it was most fortunate, for if it had grieved her sister as much as she had feared, she knew not how she could have kept up her own spirits, though, after all, the parting was rather in name than in reality, as they would still be so near each other.

Ellen listened, "with a smile on her lip and a tear in her eye." She made no reply, but gently kissed Sophia's cheek. But she felt immediately, that she must not trust herself to any expression of the tenderness with which her heart was filled for her sister, and hastily turned away to complete a garland of white roses and orange flowers, which was designed for one of the ornaments of the supper table. A tear would force its way, in spite of all her efforts, but it was quickly brushed away, and Sophia did not perceive it, for her eyes were riveted on the graceful, showy garland, which Ellen was so tastefully forming.

When Sophia's wedding was fairly over, Ellen breathed more freely ; for she had no longer to act a part, nor to fulfill the duties of an hostess, which, in a Virginia establishment, upon an occasion such as this, require the hundred eyes of Argus and hands of Briareus, and a mind everlastingly on the watch to see that the humors and tastes of every variety of guests are consulted—to prevent the modest from being neglected, the humble from being overlooked, or the dull sent to Coventry. Two or three days was a very moderate portion of time to be spent in festivities at the home of the bride, and during this time, who could tell the long stories to which Ellen lent a patient ear, the dull jokes at which she smiled, the disagreeable themes of conversation she warded off, the ingenious methods she devised to form harmonious combinations from such discordant elements, as the various minds of her guests presented ? There was one eye that marked her efforts, one heart that duly appreciated them—Gerald Livingstone was always at hand to assist and lighten her tasks, and a smile, a look of gratitude from Ellen, was more than sufficient reward for all the tedium that the greatest bore in company could inflict. Ellen's very unconsciousness of the state

of his heart, was more dangerous in its effects on his peace, than the most refined arts of coquetry could have been. The slight shade of reserve which was visible in her manner generally, except toward her most intimate friends, was entirely cast off to himself; his thoughts, his feelings, his character, reminded her of a brother dearer to her than life; and the very idea that it would be pleasing to William to see his friend received into the bosom of his family as a member of it, contributed to impart to her manner an openness, cordiality, and kindness, which unconsciously to herself, inspired her lover with the most flattering hopes.

The morning arrived on which Sophia was to "bid farewell to her father's hearth," and accompany her husband to his home, where new scenes of gayety awaited her. Ellen gladly availed herself of the excuse of a cold and slight fever, to avoid accompanying them, for she found the refreshment of a day's rest as necessary for her mind as for her body. Sophia bade all the servants who thronged to bid her adieu, a gay and good-humored farewell. Mr. Clifford, who had promised to spend the day at Arlington Hall, had walked away to avoid seeing Sophia's departure, though his ostensible motive was to give some directions respecting a plantation of young trees, which was known to be an especial pet with him. Sophia leaned on Arlington's arm, with a smile as bright as if the shadow of grief or care had never darkened her heart; but the sunshine of her brow was clouded for a moment as she received Ellen's parting kiss, and observed her quivering lip, and tearful eye. She whispered, "My dear Ellen, pray nurse yourself carefully to-day, that you may join us to-morrow; and keep up your spirits, or I can not be happy. Promise me; you know the separation is only in name; we shall see each other every day. I can not enjoy myself, when I think of your sorrowful look at parting."

"Then do not think of it," said Ellen, endeavoring to smile. "You shall see me myself again to-morrow, Sophia." As she spoke, she extended her hand to Arlington, who was evidently touched at her concern; he took her offered hand, and pressed it warmly between his own, saying, "You must not forget, in bal-

ancing good and evil, to remember that you have gained a brother. You must not mortify my vanity by showing me how lightly you value the acquisition. I, at least, know how to estimate my sister."

Ellen silently returned the pressure of Arlington's hand, and answered him with a look of kindness more eloquent than words; and Sophia's face was again lit up with smiles, as she listened to Arlington's affectionate farewell to Ellen, for she considered this manifestation of regard to her sister, as only another proof of his love for herself. As she seated herself in the carriage, she turned to wave another adieu to Ellen, who stood in the portico, motionless as a statue, and so absorbed in thinking of Sophia, that she scarcely remembered there was any one else in existence. She was aroused from this state, by the tones of Gerald Livingstone's voice, which, when he addressed her, was almost as low and sweet as her own.

"This air is very chill and wintry, and you have not even the defense of a shawl; pray, do not expose yourself longer to it. You will not refuse to listen to the first advice I ever gave you," he added, smiling and coloring at the earnestness of his own manner, which he was conscious expressed much more than the simple import of his words conveyed.

"Is it not strange," thought Ellen, "that at such a moment as this, Gerald Livingstone should be so much more solicitous for my health than Sophia?" and she could no longer repress the warm tears, which seemed to gush from her heart. "Forgive my weakness," she said; "I thank you for your kind solicitude, and I will show you how readily I receive advice, that you may be encouraged to repeat the experiment." She did not perceive the look of delight, of tenderness, of admiration, with which Gerald Livingstone took her hand as she bade him adieu, but hastily turning away, as soon as he had departed, wandered over the deserted apartments of Woodbourne, to select the one which awakened the fewest associations connected with her sister.

Two or three hours went off sadly yet rapidly; for so various and engrossing were the trains of thought which passed through Ellen's mind, that she was unconscious of the flight of time. A

servant, who had been dispatched to the nearest post-office, at some miles' distance, returned and knocked for admittance. Who has not felt the pulsations of their heart grow faster and thicker at this sound? Whose hand has not trembled as it was stretched forth to receive those unknown messengers of good or ill? or who has not felt a thousand undefined hopes and fears rush upon their minds with the rapidity of lightning, as the seal was hastily torn open, which was to reveal tidings, it may be, of weal or woe? These sensations must always be in some degree excited by letters from the absent friends who are dearest to us; such are the anxieties to which the uncertainties of life naturally give rise for those whose welfare is most precious; but when they are placed in situations of peril or hardship, such feelings become inexpressibly painful from their intensity.

The superscription on the packet which Ellen held, seemed to swim before her eyes, and a minute or two elapsed before her vision was sufficiently distinct to enable her to perceive that it was in William Clifford's handwriting, and addressed to herself. Two letters dropped unheeded from the envelope on the floor, as she tore open the packet. This envelope contained only a few hurried lines from William Clifford, to say that he was well; to give the particulars of his situation as concisely as possible; to express, with his wonted strength and simplicity, his unabated affection and solicitude concerning them all, with kind messages to Sophia on the present occasion, and inquiries respecting Olivia. The inclosed letters he said had been transmitted to him by an English officer, who had recently arrived in America.

Ellen breathed more lightly, when she had finished this letter. An emotion of thankfulness for her brother's safety filled her heart with gratitude to Heaven. She stooped to pick up the letters, which had dropped from the envelope, and had lain unheeded at her feet; but an electric shock could scarcely have caused a more sudden revulsion of feeling, for one of them addressed to her father, the other to herself, were both recognized at a glance to have been superscribed by Edgar Clifford. Ellen sighed deeply, and it was some time ere she found courage to awaken the slumbering thoughts and feelings connected with one

whom she had once so much loved, by breaking the seal. That love had past, and she had no feeling toward Edgar, which she might not have avowed to the world ; but the remembrance of it was exquisitely painful ; there was no bright spot in the past on which her memory loved to linger, the bitter self-reproach, the withering, the desolation of heart which she had once experienced for one who had proved so unworthy of her affection, rushed upon her mind with such vividness, that she seemed to live over again those dark days and months of misery and humiliation.

A bright fire was burning on the hearth, and once Ellen's hand was stretched forth to drop the unopened letter into the flames ; but this resolution was checked by a contrary impulse as strong and sudden, and she opened the letter with trembling hand. Its contents were as follows :

" An irresistible impulse urges me to address you, allow me to say, dearest Ellen, for the last time. Are we not separated by barriers as impassable as the grave ? Listen to me then, as to one speaking from another world—as one whose proud heart, humbled in the very dust before you, implores the sympathy and forgiveness, of which he has proved himself so unworthy. I have tried in vain to throw off the fearful burden which oppresses my spirits. I have sought to forget my early dreams of bliss, and to banish the recollection of those days spent with you, the very memory of which sends an inexpressible thrill of mingled pain and pleasure through my heart ; I have tried in vain in the haunts of dissipation to efface these images, but like Banquo's ghost they came unbidden to every feast, and have often changed involuntarily, almost unconsciously, my smiles into sighs, and caused the half-uttered jest to die upon my lips.

" Happiness I soon found to be out of the question ; I sought forgetfulness—excitement. What watchful nights, what weary days, have I devoted to the pursuits of ambition. My efforts were successful, but when I grasped fame, I found that I had sold myself for a phantom, which had lured me on like those lying fiends that 'keep their word of promise to the ear, but break them to the sense.' It gave what it had promised, but that

was worse than nothing. The cursed ambition of my father has destroyed me—yes, destroyed me ; for though it placed me in possession of all the world most covets, I am utterly miserable. To you only would I confess the humiliating truth, a confession which all the tortures that human nature can endure, should not wring from me to the world—but to you, Ellen, I look as to a good angel ; all my dreams of virtue and happiness which, alas to me have proved as unreal as they were bright, are so indissolubly connected with your image, that I **can not** recall one without the other. I could not only bear pity from you, but it would be a consolation to know that I still possessed an interest, even of the humblest nature, in your feelings. Two years ago, how different a place did I hope to occupy in your heart. But of this I must not even allow myself to think.

“ But, Ellen, I can not bear that you should despise me ; I can not bear that *you* should deem me so false, so heartless, so dishonorable, as my conduct must have made me appear in your eyes. I might say that I have been urged on by an irresistible fate ; I might say that, finding myself totally dependent on my father, who made the most ungenerous use of his power, seeing that he would never consent to my offering my hand where my heart was already given, and that without his assistance, I could have offered only the most hopeless poverty, the poverty of those who have been nurtured in affluence, to her whom I would not have permitted “ the winds of heaven to visit too roughly,” I became desperate. I knew too, that even if I could so far bow my pride as to ask you to share such a destiny as mine, your ideas of duty, your attachment to your father, would have proved obstacles almost, if not wholly, **insuperable to gaining your consent.** I had only a share of a divided heart, and I dared not **hope your** love for me would conquer principles, the cruel inflexibility of which, I had proved even in the parting hour, when, if ever, I knew your firmness would have failed you, for I saw how deeply you were tried.

“ There are dark moments, Ellen, when I am ready even to accuse you, to lessen if possible, my own load of self condemnation ; when I have thought that could you have loved me wholly,

could you have trusted me entirely, could you have renounced all things for my sake, all might yet have been well with me. These moments, however, are of short duration, for I have still reason enough left to perceive that you could not, without violating the beauty and dignity of your character, have consented to renounce what appeared to you the most sacred principles of duty, or to enter my family, with the curse of a father upon our heads. And even could this have been, my own selfish, ungenerous conduct, must have dashed the sweet waters of happiness from my lips, presented but once, as if in mockery, to be forever withdrawn ; or, more cruel reflection still, to be cast away in madness.

“ It is true, that my love for you was not divided ; for the love which I felt for every other human being, if weighed together against it, would have been but as dust in the balance : but there was a conflict warring in my soul, the poison of ambition had been instilled in my mind with the first dawn of reason, and I sought in vain for some means of reconciling the hopes of love with the visions of fame. I was always taught to believe that **my talents and advantages might open for me the most brilliant career.** My pride and restless activity of mind naturally disposed me to “ the last infirmity of noble minds,” and this bias was increased by the influence of one of the most subtle and powerful minds I have ever known, until the dreams of ambition were interwoven with every thought, purpose, and feeling of my soul.

“ Nothing disturbed the supremacy of ambition in my mind, until I saw you, when I found myself under the influence of a spell so new, so sweet, so irresistible, that every thing else was for a while forgotten, and I lived only for the present, without reverting to the past, or looking forward to the future. And even now, I can not regret those bright glances of happiness, which seemed to belong to a purer, higher state of existence, though the recollection of them, seems only to make the darkness by which I am surrounded more hopeless and impenetrable. Then first it dawned upon my soul, that there might be a reality in virtue, that there might possibly be truth in religion, and that

this frail and feverish being was not the whole of existence. I could not listen to you, could not look at you, without wishing that these things were indeed true, were it only for your sake.

“ These were my first feelings, but the demons which slumbered in my heart awoke, and could you have seen the violence of the conflict between love, ambition, and selfishness in my heart, you would have pitied me. I saw that you loved me, with an emotion pure and generous as such a heart as yours is alone capable of feeling ; but I was not satisfied with the nature or degree of your love—I wished to be loved by you supremely, exclusively. I began to view your principles of duty, your religious creed, which seemed to oppose so formidable a barrier between us, with dislike, though I could not view without admiration the beautiful effects produced by them upon your character. The very warmth of your affection for your family, your friends, especially your father, which had first taught me what a priceless treasure was the love of such a heart, now often irritated and wounded me, for every mark of love bestowed upon them, seemed a proof that I did not occupy the first place in your affections. I determined to ascertain the extent of my power, and this determination combined with the irresolution of purpose produced by the promptings of ambition, caused a course of conduct toward you so strange, so contradictory, so unkind, that I can not recall it without remorse and shame. I saw the pain I inflicted, and yet incomprehensible as such a feeling will appear to you, I could never be satisfied with the degree of it, for I thought your love for me was proportioned to the pain you felt at my coldness. I remember but too well the dignified and generous forbearance with which you treated me, the delicacy and consideration of kindness, which was felt rather than seen, the very unobtrusiveness of which proved its sincerity, as it shrank even from my observation. I see it all now, though too late, and could I, in taking a retrospect of the past, find any thing for which I could reproach you, I sometimes feel, as if it would make me less unhappy.

“ I could not then view any thing in its true light, and the increasing reserve of your manner necessarily produced by my own

conduct, and the consciousness that the watchful eye of disapprobation was always upon you to misinterpret the most trifling action, often filled my heart with the strongest emotions of concern and resentment. But enough. It is worse than vain to retrace scenes so replete with painful and humiliating remembrances.

“ When I left you, Ellen, the charm of life seemed over, and as the hope daily grew dimmer in my heart that you could ever be mine, and as the state of dependence—rather let me say the vilest of bondage—pecuniary bondage to my father—daily grew more irksome, I sought, at least, forgetfulness, in scenes best calculated to produce the strongest temporary excitement. I found this in the gaming table. Games of chance always possessed for me a perilous fascination, and their attraction was now increased by the hope of gain ; for any thing was more tolerable than dependence upon a father, who could deliberately take advantage of my necessities, to seal my unhappiness for the gratification of his own ambition. I can not wish you to understand the feelings to which this unnatural conduct gave rise within my heart. I was at first successful in my career, but the evil destiny which presided over me from my birth at length prevailed against me. I know that I shock you, Ellen, but the feelings and thoughts which have been so long pent up within my heart, must find utterance once—and once only.

“ I lost deeply, and saw myself plunged in inextricable ruin. To apply to my father for assistance was worse than death ; yet I could have suffered even this, had I not known that I should sue in vain, even had I descended to the humblest supplications. I was now driven to the point, to which he had been for years endeavoring to urge me. I had been so unfortunate as to excite an infatuated attachment in the heart of a noble and wealthy heiress before I visited America, and she had persevered with fatal constancy in loving me, despite my coldness and neglect. It had long been the first wish of my father’s heart, that I should form so advantageous an alliance, which would at once, open a path to the brilliant career on which he wished me to enter. I knew the fearful tenacity of my father’s purposes, and had always a

presentiment that they would be accomplished, notwithstanding my own resolution to the contrary.

"I will not attempt to describe the state of my feelings. Could I have been assured that death was indeed the dreamless sleep I have sometimes believed it to be, I should not have hesitated to throw off the burden of existence. But should there be a dread tribunal before which actions are weighed—should there be an unknown spiritual world—should Christianity be true? These doubts pressed with painful intensity on my mind, and I could not decide to take the dark and fearful leap, which should solve these enigmas. Ruin and dishonor stared me in the face, and there was no alternative, no escape, but by offering my hand to Lady Julia, of whose acceptance I was alas, too sure.

"I hated myself for the insincerity of my own protestations; though they were so few, so cold, it **required** all the blind infatuation of Lady Julia to believe that **they sprang** from my heart. She was beautiful, she breathed only **the incense** of flattery, and she had even more than an usual **share** of womanly vanity, and yet her devotion to me was strong enough to conquer even the love of admiration; for the least word, the **slightest** attention from me, seemed to make her forgetful and **indifferent** to all around but myself. Under other circumstances, **these marks** of preference, from one **whom** all admired, would have **gratified** my vanity, or touched my heart with compunction, for the **deception** I was practicing; but now they increased my coldness almost to aversion, for I considered them as sealing my fate, for they left not the shadow of a doubt as to the success of my suit. After years, too, of neglect, to be so easily duped, for I scarcely made an effort to please, showed a deficiency in delicacy, dignity, and penetration which excited my contempt.

"My dislike to an union which I now regarded as inevitable, I had thought scarcely admitted of increase; for did it not involve a renunciation of my dearest hopes—hopes which could not be torn away without drops of blood from every fibre of my heart! But I had yet to learn the impossibility of assigning limits to the intensity of our emotions. The undisguised pleasure with which my father watched me offering up my happiness at the shrine

of interest and ambition, though fully aware how deep and deadly was the pang which the sacrifice cost ; created a fearful whirlwind of passion within my bosom, which even now I shudder to recall. I felt that I could not long endure a state of things like this, and determined to hurry my marriage to a conclusion, as I thought even the most dreaded certainty would at least have the effect of tranquilizing my mind. The expiring agonies of hope inseparably connected with any degree of uncertainty, are perhaps the most insupportable of all the tortures human nature can suffer.

"Lady Julia offered no opposition to my wishes. We were married after a very short engagement. Pride sustained me at the altar, as it would have done at the gallows. The eye of man shall never see the weakness or the suffering of my soul. When Julia first detailed in glowing colors her plans for the future, when she spoke of the bright and blissful prospects before us, and whispered her unutterable happiness at the consciousness that our destinies were united beyond the power of fate to sever ; for the first time, a transient emotion of pity touched my heart, and I felt a momentary pang of remorse for the cruel deception I had used toward her.

"Had you been placed in such a situation as mine, pity, and an exalted sense of duty might have enabled you to conceal your want of affection ; but with a nature such as mine, it would have been impossible. Nor could I even wish to place myself in a state of such horrible bondage. I determined then to reap the wages for which I had sold myself ; to try whether the pursuits and rewards of ambition could slake the restless fever of my spirit, and whether their spell was strong enough to dim those dreams of the past, which haunted my soul. I have already told you with what success this pursuit was attended. Julia could not at last help perceiving not only that **our** pursuits and plans were different, but that home had no attraction for me. Reproaches, caresses, tears, fits of silence, were all tried in vain to touch me. I continued to pursue my own course resolutely ; but yet Julia's reproaches and distress annoyed me, and I would have given the world, if her love for me could have been changed

into indifference. Her exacting fondness fettered and wearied me, nor had it even the effect of exalting my self-esteem, for I saw that her fond and indiscriminating admiration was bestowed alike upon my best and worst actions, and for my sake, she was ready to pronounce evil good, and good evil.

“ You will doubtless think this an additional proof of the ingratitude and perversity of my nature ; for you may recall, if indeed you ever permit thoughts of bygone days to revisit your memory, the bitterness of feeling that I experienced at every proof that your love for me had not power to obscure the clearness of your moral perceptions. But if my heart reproached you then, you have since been amply avenged, for the firmness and purity of principle which then seemed cold and unkind, have invested your image in my memory, with a sacredness and beauty, from which I strive in vain to turn my eyes, or to withdraw the vain worship of my heart.

“ But for these recollections, I had almost forgotten that I had a heart, until an unexpected event awakened within it emotions of tenderness, of pity, of compunction, which I had supposed were slumbering forever. There is nothing in my past life, on which I look back with more self-abhorrence, than the emotions of hope with which I used to look forward to my brother's death ; for this event alone seemed to render an union with you possible. I shall never forget the look of horror with which you listened to the bare intimation of such a hope. But I was destined to meet with disappointment in this unnatural desire. Soon after I returned to England, a favorable change appeared to take place in my brother's disease, and his health was so far re-established, as to afford him a reasonable prospect for many years of life, if not of permanent recovery. I will not awaken my own remorse, or excite your abhorrence, by adverting to the feelings of disappointment to which ~~this~~ **this** circumstance gave rise in my heart. The emotion most **nearly** allied to tenderness which I had ever experienced for Francis, was that of contemptuous pity. There is an alienation of heart, a separation of mind, which sometimes takes place between those whom nature and circumstances seem to have bound most closely together, which opposes barriers vaster

and more insurmountable than oceans and mountains. My brother and I seemed to have lived in different worlds, nor had I ever dreamed that he wished it to be otherwise. I thought we were equally indifferent to each other.

"Some time had elapsed after my marriage, when I received an unexpected summons from Francis to come to him immediately. Over-exertion had brought on an hemorrhage in his lungs, and he had sunk into such a state of prostration, that the physicians who attended him, entertained but little hope of his surviving beyond a few days. Death seemed arrayed before me in all its solemnity and reality, and when I thought of my brother snatched off in the flower of his youth, I felt strong sentiments of concern and compassion at his early fate. But I shudder to confess, that I was haunted by the thought, that seemed like the suggestion of a fiend, that this event had come too late. Had it happened a few months ago, how different my destiny might have been.

"But when I saw my brother stretched on the bed of death, these thoughts and feelings vanished. My soul melted within me, as he pressed my hand gently in his, and looked in my face with an earnest tenderness, which I can never forget. I never knew until that heart was about to moulder into dust, that it was filled with love for me; for my own neglect and unkindness had stifled every expression of its tenderness. I learned to abhor the cruelty of the treatment, which had sunk so deeply into a soul so gentle, so tender as my brother's; for he spoke with the most touching gentleness, for the first time, of his consciousness of mental inferiority, and of the deep humiliation he had experienced in finding himself an object of contempt to those upon whom his heart yearned to pour forth its fondness.

"I had never before watched by a death-bed, and the approaching signs of dissolution filled my heart with cold, dark, and deadly despair; for I then first realized how awful a thing it is to die. Life's fleeting hours seemed to have sped away, and I stood, as it were, on the verge of the grave, ready to sink within its dark prison, without one ray of hope to gild the gloom beyond. I was amazed to behold the unaffected calmness and serenity with which Francis awaited the inevitable approach of death. Why

did my spirit, naturally so much stronger, prouder, bolder than his own, shrink from terrors, which he, with a frame prostrated by suffering, and a degree of nervous sensibility amounting to feminine weakness, met with courage worthy of a hero? What unseen power upheld him? He was in perfect possession of his senses, he had no natural enthusiasm or pride of character to animate or support him. He told me that these effects were produced on his mind by the consoling influences of Christian faith, and described the change which these principles had effected in his heart, with the touching simplicity and strength of genuine feeling. He besought me with a degree of earnestness and affection that touched me deeply, to consider the truth of Christianity, to examine the foundations upon which it rested, and entreated me to use my influence on our father to induce him to do likewise. As he expressed the fervor of his wish, that our minds should be awakened to the reality of those truths, upon which his hopes of happiness rested, an uncontrollable gush of tenderness filled his eyes with tears, which suffering had never been able to draw from them; and when he told me, that he had only been restrained from urging this request before, by the painful consciousness that his mental deficiencies had deprived his opinions of all weight with his father and myself, had not pride restrained me, I could have wept like a child.

"I first found what a treasure I might have possessed in my brother's affection, when I was about to lose it forever. I poured forth to him thoughts and feelings which had swelled within my heart, unknown to all, and how did it increase the bitterness of my self-condemnation, and strengthen the continually recurring impression that I was under the influence of an evil destiny, when I found, that but for the pride and unkindness which had prevented any confidence between Francis and myself, he would have been my preserving angel in the hour of need, and prevented the sacrifice of happiness which I can never sufficiently deplore!

"All that I saw and heard imparted new vividness to the images which I had so long and vainly sought to banish. Again I stood by your side, Ellen, and gazed on those fair scenes on which these eyes shall rest no more; again I heard that voice,

whose inexpressible sweetness has so often melted my heart; again I listened to those words of touching eloquence, which charmed if they could not convince. Francis's words carried to my heart the same conviction of sincerity and feeling, his very expressions reminded me of yours, and there was something in his glance of sad and earnest tenderness as his eye sought mine, which recalled one whose remembrance no time can efface.

"As I stood by my brother's breathless clay, and watched the calm, and even beautiful expression of his brow, I could not help wishing that if the hopes which had imparted such peace even in the hour of death, were indeed delusive, I had been taught to cherish so blessed a delusion. I had just seen so striking a proof of the efficacy of the Christian creed in transforming the character, in consoling and sustaining the weakest and tenderest of hearts when passing through the last awful conflict, that my infidelity was in some degree shaken. I know not how long these impressions might have lasted, nor what might have been the result, had not my father arrived to wither the buds of hope by the cold touch of infidel philosophy. I had never before experienced a similar revulsion of mind at this gloomy creed.

"And now, dear Ellen, you will say, why was a communication made, which could only give unavailing pain to us *both*—yes, *both*, for I know your generosity, your forgiveness and sympathy for human error and suffering too well, to believe that you can read these pages unmoved, the outpourings of bitterness of a heart too proud to break. I can only say that I yielded to an impulse too strong for resistance, perhaps the impulse of selfishness, for I could not help feeling that it would be a relief to believe that I had excited your compassion. This last letter to one whom I shall never more behold, but who must live in my heart until it ceases to beat, seems like the sad visit of a disembodied spirit to those most loved on earth, a communion rendered even more sad from a sense of the impassable barriers which separate them.

"Were I like yourself, I might say that I should rejoice to hear that your affections were bestowed on one worthy of such a treasure, if indeed, such a being exists; and that you experienced in

his love, the purest earthly happiness, while every recollection of one so unworthy as myself was completely obliterated ; but I can not be such a hypocrite. I could not hear of such an event without exquisite pain, and it would be a sweet and mournful pleasure, to know that some kind and gentle thoughts were still associated with my image in your memory. Will you keep the cross I left with you ? I do not ask you to wear it, but I should like to think that any thing which had been mine was in your possession, and might sometimes meet your eye.

“Many changes have passed over me since we parted, but none that you would not grieve to witness. I know of nothing concerning myself which could give you pleasure to know, but that I am resolved to comply with my brother’s last request—to give the subject of Christianity a thorough investigation ; and a hope sometimes crosses my mind, that the result of this examination may be a belief in the truth of its doctrines. If there is any power in heaven or earth which can give rest to my spirit, I would court its influence. ‘*Implora pace :*’ ’tis all I ask. I still toil on in the pursuit of what I know to be shadows, but it is because the excitement of pursuit is necessary to me. Farewell, dearest Ellen, my hand trembles to write farewell for ever. If any consoling or purifying influence should ever visit my heart, or if the hope should ever dawn on me, that though lost to me for ever in this world, we may meet again in brighter, purer regions ; should I ever become better or happier, you shall hear once more from me ; if not, this is the last token which will ever reach you of the existence of

“EDGAR CLIFFORD.”

The letter dropped from Ellen’s hand, as the last words met her eye. Who could tell the variety, the sadness, the intensity of emotions which the perusal of this letter occasioned ? Tears gushed to her eyes, as her glance rested on the well known characters, which had once excited such pleasurable feelings. There was not one spark of gratified resentment, one throb of womanly vanity, mingled with the sentiments she experienced in reading Edgar’s confessions of unhappiness, or his expressions of unalter-

ed love toward herself. While she could not help perceiving the selfishness of attempting to revive feelings in her heart, which her duty and happiness alike commanded should be crushed, or of awakening regret in the bosom of one to whom he had caused so much unhappiness, all the bitterness of condemnation was lost in the deepest pity and concern for one whom she had once loved so truly. Once again she read the letter, and deliberated for a moment whether she should preserve this last memorial of Edgar, but it was for a moment only that she hesitated. Stretching forth her hand, she deliberately consigned the letter to the flames, and watched it as it slowly consumed. "So perish all remembrance of our ill-fated love," she thought. "Oh Edgar, cruel to the last. Why thus tear my heart by the expression of sentiments so sinful for you to cherish, and which you might well have deemed dangerous to my peace, to dwell on? Thank God, these feelings find now no echo in my heart. Yet I can not think of the hopeless gloom which this picture of his mind presents, without a bitter pang of sorrow. Why deny to me the poor consolation of hoping that you were happy, and that the light of truth had dawned on your soul? Why add this thought to the store of bitter recollections you have left me?"

Many were the bitter tears that Ellen shed, as all the sad remembrances associated with Edgar thronged on her mind, but her piety was too deep and fervent to allow her to indulge in unavailing sorrow, or to murmur at the dispensations of Providence. She saw that much of the painful discipline through which she had passed, had been necessary for the purification of her heart, and she was ready in the confidence of child-like faith to believe implicitly that what appeared to her most mysterious, was but a part of the same gracious design. She found relief in trusting her cares to "Him who heareth prayer," and the simple and fervent faith with which she commended Edgar to His mercy, imparted healing and comfort to her own soul.

CHAPTER XLIX.

"Not to the earth confined,
Ascend to heaven."

ELLEN's mind was not attuned to the gay scenes that awaited her next day at Arlington Lodge, but she made a strong effort to appear cheerful, and no one but Gerald Livingstone heard her check an involuntary sigh, or observed her temporary fits of abstraction, which her utmost exertions could not entirely prevent. His place was by her side, whenever it was possible to be near her, and she listened to him evidently with more interest and pleasure than to any one else, little dreaming of the delusive and flattering inference to which her preference gave rise in his mind.

Not many days elapsed before Gerald Livingstone found an opportunity of declaring sentiments which he had so long cherished, yet feared to express. He sought to prepare Ellen for this declaration, by gradually bringing the conversation to this point, and she listened unsuspiciously; she thought from the nature of the sentiments he expressed, that he was about to confide the secrets of his heart to her friendship, and she listened with such looks of sympathizing interest, and replied in such sweet tones of kindness, that he was encouraged to proceed. He was astonished at the start of unaffected surprise, with which Ellen heard a declaration of love too plain to misunderstand, and his hopes were instantly withered, as he observed the expression of deep concern which instantly overshadowed her countenance.

"Is it possible," he exclaimed in a tone of the bitterest disappointment. "Is it possible that my presumptuous hopes have so cruelly misled me? Can it be, Miss Clifford, that you have never before suspected the nature of my sentiments, and that the discovery now, has only given you pain?"

He paused and looked earnestly and anxiously at Ellen; but as her calm and sorrowful glance met his, he felt there was nothing to hope.

"Never until this moment, did I even suspect that you felt for me a sentiment stronger than friendship, and it is with real pain that I have listened to your declaration of feelings, which I can not return. You have my esteem, my friendship, my warmest wishes for your happiness; and believe me, when I say, that I can not inflict a pang on you, without participating in it."

"I can not help believing any thing that you say, strange as it may seem that you should have seen no evidences of love, which has long been too strong for concealment; had there been no other proof of your indifference, this would be sufficient. But one question more, though I scarcely know now whether I ought to ask it, yet I would fain cling to hope, however distant, though pride, perhaps even dignity, would check further importunity. Do you believe it possible that I could ever win your love? May I ask whether any insurmountable barrier exists, or whether you have formed any previous attachment?"

A bright crimson tint suffused Ellen's face, and was instantly succeeded by a hue of deadly paleness as she replied: "I might spare my own feelings, and yet answer with perfect truth, not only that I feel no attachment stronger than friendship for any one, but that I am well assured I never shall feel one. But to convince you of the sincerity of my wish to remove every shadow of suspense from your mind, I will say to you what I have never before acknowledged to any human being. I have loved another, and though that love has fled forever, I am sure I could never feel this sentiment again."

"Do you not believe the heart capable of loving more than once?"

"Yes, certainly; and second attachments are often, I believe, strongest, happiest; but hearts are differently constituted, and mine could never again be moved to love."

Ellen could not witness the pain she inflicted; without the most lively concern, nor without some attempt to soften the deep regret and mortification which were visible in the countenance

of Gerald Livingstone. "I will not ask you," she continued, "to forget me—my friendship for you is too strong, too sincere, for me to wish it. I would rather retain a place in your memory as a friend, a sister. Believe me, no one feels more deeply, or appreciates more highly, the exalted qualities of your mind and heart than I do; and it is the very strength of my regard and esteem, which makes me anxious to convince you of the impossibility of ever feeling any other sentiments toward you, than those I now entertain."

"My heart thanks you for the kindness of your words, though they carry but deeper conviction of how little you understand the state of my feelings. You know not how difficult is the task you impose, to regard you as a friend, a sister, after having been vain and presumptuous enough to cherish dearer, tenderer hopes. They can not be eradicated without inflicting a mortal wound which I fear can never be healed; for what image can ever succeed yours, in a heart which you have once occupied? I too, might say, my heart can never again be moved to love. But in renouncing hope, I renounce all the weakness which unnerved my purposes. I can no longer hesitate to tread the stern path of duty that lies before me, and should the light of glory be shed around my way, the strongest pleasurable sensation it could excite, would be the hope, that you would not hear my name coupled with lofty deeds, unmoved."

"Deeds are not wanting to prove to me that you are capable of heroic actions. I think I have read your soul, nor would my judgment be affected by the voice of fame or censure; whether in weal or woe my sympathy, my friendship, my admiration are yours, for they rest on foundations that can not be shaken. My best wishes for your happiness will attend you; and I trust that time, absence, the lofty and serious nature of the pursuits in which you are engaged, will speedily obliterate all painful impressions. Whenever this takes place, I need not say with how much pleasure I should meet you again."

Gerald Livingstone only shook his head in reply, for he felt his firmness forsaking him. Hastily arising, he extended his hand toward Ellen to bid her adieu. He saw, as her eyes

were raised to his, that they were filled with tears, and he heard her voice falter as she bade him farewell ; yet he did not mistake the nature of her emotions, as almost any other man, under similar circumstances, would have done.

Ellen watched Gerald Livingstone from the window as he withdrew, and the thought occurred to her that she might never see him again. His many noble and attaching qualities rose to her recollection, tears dimmed her eyes, and she sighed deeply. As she turned her head she was surprised to see her father standing near her, with a look of inquiry and concern.

"Why, what has happened, Ellen? I just met Gerald Livingstone in the grove, walking as if he was under sentence of death ; I could scarcely stop him long enough to reply to my greetings, or to answer a few common questions of civility ; and I find you absorbed in meditation, your eyes filled with tears, and sighing as if your heart was breaking. Can you explain the mystery?"

"Yes, dear father," said Ellen, seating herself, "sit down by me, and I will explain all."

Mr. Clifford seated himself by Ellen, and took her hand in his, as she told him of Gerald Livingstone's declaration of love, of the painful surprise it had occasioned her, and of her rejection of his suit.

He listened with deep attention and unusual seriousness ; he turned his eyes once upon Ellen, as if to read what was passing in her heart, before he replied, "My dear child, I fear you have been too precipitate, that you have not taken time to understand the nature of your own sentiments. I have never seen any man to whom I could so willingly confide your happiness as to Gerald Livingstone, for to you I may say without danger of incurring a smile at a father's partiality, that I know no one but your brother, who possesses so many lofty attributes of character, combined with so much tenderness and consideration for others. He could understand and appreciate my daughter."

"My dear father," said Ellen, twining her arms around his neck. "I ask no other happiness than to live always at your side ; 'Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return after following thee, for whither thou goest, I will go ; and wherever thou lodgest, I

will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God shall be my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried ; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part me and thee.' ”

As Ellen quoted the most touching expressions in which human love ever poured forth its tenderness ; her father was deeply affected, and said in a ~~tone~~ of great emotion. “ I feel your tenderness, my child, in the inmost depths of my heart—the more so that I am conscious that no words can convey too forcible an idea of the strength of that devotion, which has so long made my happiness the first object in life. But though your presence and affection are the sources of my greatest enjoyment, my sweetest consolation, your happiness is far more precious to me even than these. I can not permit you, for my sake, to reverse the order of nature, which commands that parents should endeavor to secure the happiness of their children. This is one of the kind methods by which God weakens our ties to this world, in the evening of our days, and by freeing our minds from anxious and distressing thoughts, enables us to look forward to the period of our dismissal with tranquillity, and even with joyful hope. It is easy to leave those we love, when we see them forming new and stronger ties ; but to feel ourselves failing, and those who are dearer to us than life, still clinging around us for happiness, weakens the heart when it should be strongest, and fills it with earthly regret, when it should be fixed on heaven.”

“ If you understood my feelings fully, father, you would not let one anxious thought for me disturb the tranquillity of your mind. Let us fix our hearts together on Heaven, trusting the future implicitly in the hands of God ; and should that dark and desolate day come when you are removed from me forever in this world, still I shall not sorrow as one without hope ; for I shall remember at the close of every day, that I draw nearer to the end of a journey, whose termination will unite me to my blessed mother and yourself, to part no more. As to earthly ties and affections, it is the weakness of my heart to be too strongly fettered by them. You need not fear that I shall not find objects of sufficient interest in life.”

"It is because I know the strength of your affections, that I wish to see you, my child, cherished by the strongest degree of love of which the human heart is capable. I wish you to experience what I believe to be the highest degree of earthly happiness, that of loving and being loved by an object worthy of your tenderness, and to whom you are bound by the strongest and most indissoluble ties."

"But," said Ellen, "the greatest earthly happiness likewise exposes us to the bitterest earthly bereavements; and to me, who feel but too keenly the common trials of life, it is at least a blessing to be exempted from the possibility of such sorrow. But waiving this question as to the balance of happiness, you would not, I am sure, father, wish me to form such an union without the strongest degree of affection. Whatever reason might say as to the advantages of a marriage without love, to me it would be perjury, and could never be productive of happiness."

"No, my dear; I would not have you act in contradiction to your feelings or conscience, in any thing, particularly in an affair of the greatest importance. All I wished, was to be assured, that you had not been led, by false tenderness to me, to mistake the real nature of your sentiments. I could wish you a happier lot, than to cling to the destiny of one from whose heart the bright dreams of life have fled forever, and who has long found the reflection that the time is short, one of the strongest supports and consolations in a pilgrimage, which even the affection of children such as parent was never before blest with, can not prevent, at times, from appearing weary and desolate."

"Trust me," said Ellen, "I would not deceive you. Believe me, if I acted wholly from selfishness, I would choose to remain with you, for this is my happiness. But if this assurance will satisfy you, I will promise you, that if ever a change should take place in my sentiments, I will tell you candidly."

"On this promise then I will rely," replied her father. Ellen pressed the hand she had held within her own to her lips, then relinquishing it, withdrew to her own apartment, to think over what had passed.

And Ellen did not repent her determination; it was her dear-

est pleasure to cheer her father's hours of sadness, to watch over his declining days, and to perform all the nameless daily ministrations of love, in which a heart such as Ellen Clifford's, not only gives but receives happiness.

When a favorable turn had taken place in American affairs, Ellen had the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing her brother united to her dearest friend ; and when they were gathered together under the same roof, one of the first wishes of her heart was gratified. The warmth of her affection, and the ardor of that unwearied benevolence, which springs from Christian principle, were continually opening to her new sources of delight and interest, not only in the improvment and welfare of those most closely connected with her by the ties of nature, but in the happiness of all around her. The painful discipline through which she had passed had worked its salutary effects upon her character. Her heart naturally too prone to yearn for sympathy, and to cling with idolatrous affection to the objects of its love, had learned by the terrible experience of its own weakness, and the insufficiency of the broken reeds on which it had leant, to turn for strength and consolation to Him who "remembereth that we are but dust," and who alone can sustain the hearts of his creatures. Implicit reliance upon God imparted a loftier tone and higher degree of moral courage to her character, for nothing more surely inspires courage toward man, and a noble disregard of consequences in the pursuit of duty, than humility before God, and an unhesitating and implicit trust in His goodness.

The painful remembrances connected with one whom she "had loved not wisely but too well," could not be wholly obliterated ; yet the regrets connected with Edgar arose chiefly from the recollection of the dark and hopeless state of mind his letter had described.

How anxiously did she look for the lines, which, if hope ever dawned on Edgar's mind, were to convey to her the blessed assurance ! Nor were her generous hopes doomed to disappointment. A few lines from Edgar's hand once more reached her ; they breathed the spirit of sadness, doubt, uncertainty—they evinced domestic unhappiness, though Lady Julia's name was

not mentioned; nor did he again allude to the hopeless love, which his former letter had expressed for herself. They showed that a "change had passed o'er the spirit in his dream," his pursuits in life were altered, a sense of moral responsibility was awakened, and he had become a sincere inquirer into the truths of Christianity.

Ellen had no doubt how such an inquiry, pursued sincerely, would terminate; and tears of thankfulness, refreshing as the dews of heaven to the parched earth, flowed from her eyes—tears such as angels might shed. He will be happy at last, she repeated again and again. There are bright moments in life, when clear manifestations of the love and goodness of God throw a radiance over the dark events of life; the mysteries of the past are revealed, and the light of faith and hope so illumines the future, that we fear not to tread its hidden path, but with adoring love and gratitude, delight in surrendering ourselves to the guidance of such a Father. At such moments the very act of confidence and trust is so delightful, that we experience the full force of those divine words, "Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed."

THE END.





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